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September, 2001

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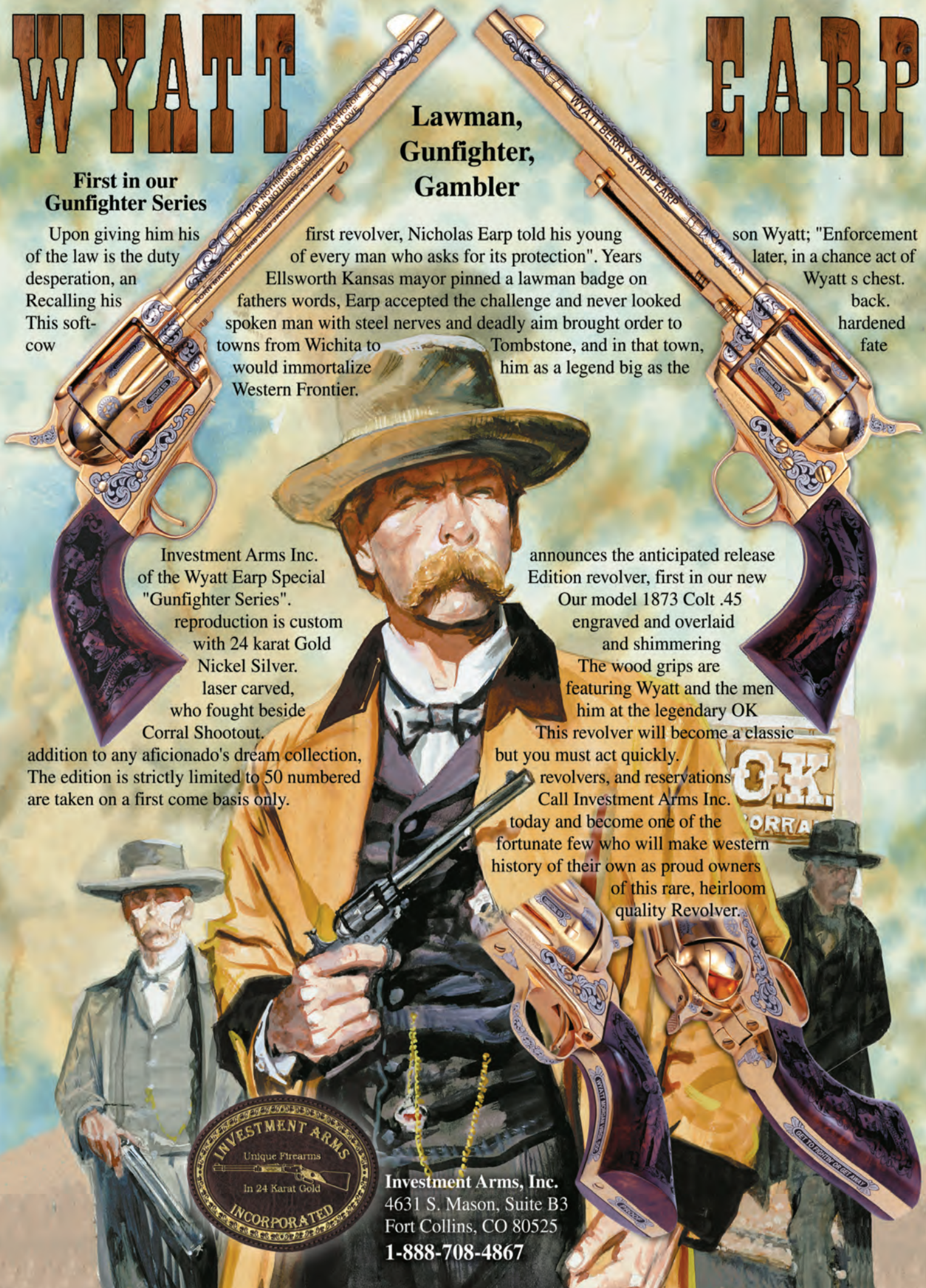
GUEST EDITORS: JOSEPH G. ROSA & THADD M. TURNER

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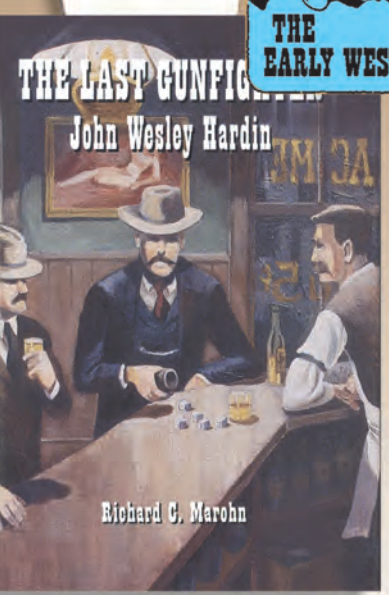


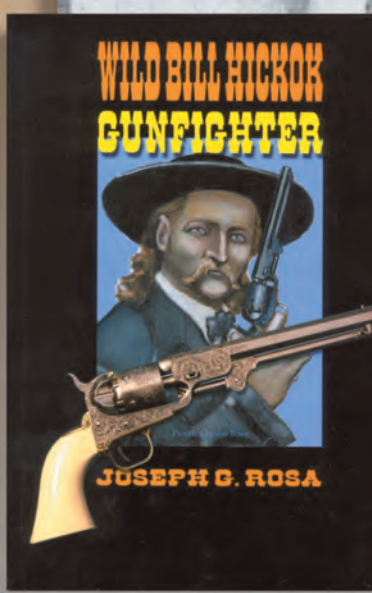
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TRUE WEST
NO BULL SINCE 1953
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Our Cover
Wild Bill circa 1870
– Courtesy Craig Fouts –

This page:
Colorado Charlie Utter and (possibly) Arapaho Joe reinter Wild Bill.
– Deadwood Public Library –

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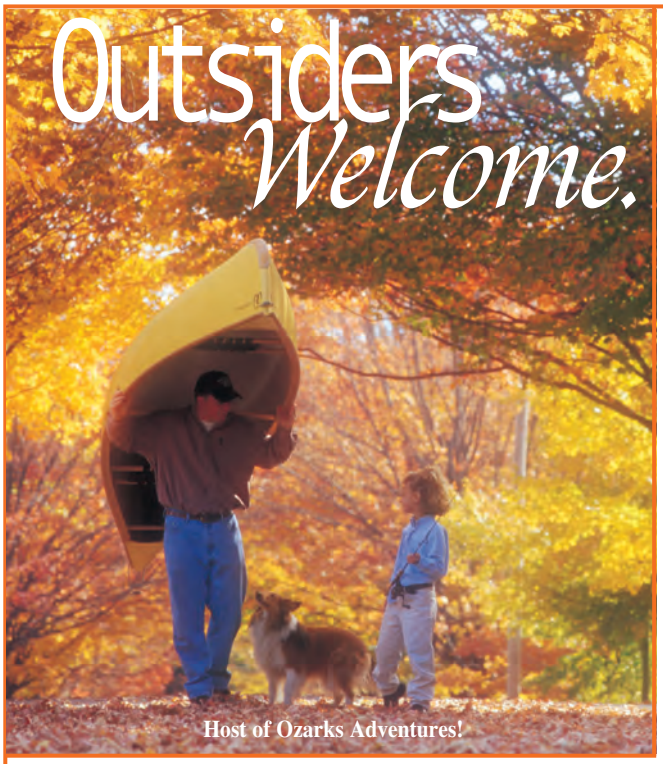
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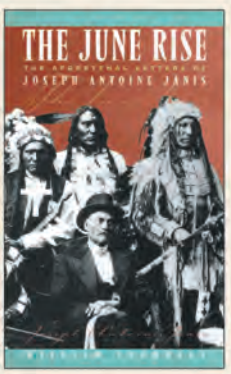
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TO THE POINT







Dutch Bill Vs. Duck Bill

Being an artist, one of my avid interests, besides the Old West, is the Impressionist painters. For one thing, it's the same time period (1870s-80s). Consequently, for me, a Toulouse Lautrec portrayal of the clothing, mustaches and hairdos from the bordellos of France can be just as instructive as a Remington or a Russell. While looking for artistic inspiration for this issue, I got sucked into the vortex of Van Gogh-ville. Rather than just looking at the paintings for a color scheme or a technique I could steal, like I normally do, I began to read about Vincent's life (One can't really loaf well unless one has a lot to do). In fact, I became so enamored of the doomed Dutch Bill (Van Gogh's middle name was Willem), it began to bleed over into my paintings of ol' "Duck Bill."



Wild Bill Makes Three

This special issue marks the third collector's edition of our new format, and we must warn you: the first two, Earp and Custer, have already sold out (we saved 100 of each to package collector sets for Christmas). We are proud to have both Joseph Rosa and newcomer Thadd Turner co-edit this issue on James Butler Hickok. They did an excellent job and we hope you agree.

Are Westerns Dead?

As I was being interviewed recently for a newspaper article on the new True West Museum at Rawhide, the reporter asked an increasingly familiar question: "Since Westerns are no longer a part of the larger American scene do you think there is a market for an Old West museum?" I bit my tongue and answered as calmly as I could (it was a phone interview and he couldn't see me standing on my desk, flailing my arms).

I informed him that Tom Selleck's last outing in January of this year, *Crossfire Trail*, managed to attract a whopping 10.7 million viewers—making it the most watched cable TV movie ever, yes *ever!* Or, that single-action shooting is the fastest growing sport in America. Or, that a million people visited Rawhide last year, or that 600,000 visited Tombstone. Or that 100,000 attend End of Trail and Festival of the West. Or that Don Endsley's *Great American Wild West* Show is selling out, sometimes three and four shows, everywhere it goes.

"Then why are there fewer Westerns being made?" the reporter shot back.

While it is true there are fewer Western movies being made, it is a media myth that the market for Westerns, or the Old West has disappeared. What has gone away is the media's support for the genre.

Numerous reenactors have told me that when the TV crews show up to record an Old West parade or festival they invariably turn off the camera when the guns come out. We can understand the politics: TV stations don't need nor want the criticism of condoning violence. However, right or wrong, the policy has the effect of editing our world out of the mainstream press. The problem is this: we are not politically correct. So be it. (Besides, being politically correct means always having to say you're sorry.)

We, In The Western Media Need to Support Each Other

Magazines have always been very cut-throat and competitive. Last year when we were debating whether to trade mailing lists with *Wild West* magazine, our former editor blurted out, "Would you sell gold to the Nazis?!" What was shocking to me was the palpable hatred he had for another publication that basically loves the same things we do. I ended up trading lists with *Wild West* because I believe there is room enough for both of us. I subscribe to multiple magazines in the field of my interests, and I imagine, you do too. Our recent reader's survey has opened my eyes even more: One of our questions was, "What other Western publications do you read?" We listed *Old West Journal, Wild West, Guns of the West, Cowboys & Indians, NOLA/WOLA Journal, Chronicle of the Old West, Cowboy Chronicle (SASS), American Cowboy, Range, Shoot* and *Route 66 Magazine*. The number of respondents who checked multiple titles was quite encouraging. We also got more than a few who wrote at the bottom, "I didn't know these magazines existed," and "If I'd known about these, I would subscribe."

With this issue, you'll know all about them. On page 27 is a listing of our friend's publications and how to contact them. We hope you'll give them a try.



Bob Boze Bell

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SHOOTING BACK

A Classic True West Letter

You fellers have a great magazine. Keep up the great work—but keep that damned Wild Bill Hickok out of *True West* if you can. I'm getting sick and tired of hearing the name Hickok. Hickok! Hickok! Hickok! Hickok, the Hero; I'd say Hickok, the Rat! Why don't you people quit talking as if Hickok was the greatest gunman of his time?

Eugene Stagg
Floweree, Montana
July/August 1975

Getting Hip

Having just had a new hip installed, I am belatedly reading the April 2001 issue of *True West* and certainly agree with all the old guys born prior to WWII that TW. has far too much sex in it now. By the way, where can I get a copy of the August 1958 issue, or at least the cover, the one showing the Indian lady getting her blouse torn off, just so I can remember what it is that I don't like?

Donald Kaye
Via the Internet

Generation Landslide

Your conclusion that a "generation divide" exists in your readership ruffles my feathers a tad. I am a member of the pre-WWII generation and I'm also a staunch lifelong proponent of nekked ladies, although I do tend to veer away from the ones packing six shooters.

There are ribbon clerks in every generation.

Be not daunted by the watery-eyed, mouth breathers.

Boyd Schwartz
Santee, California

Likes What He Hears

Thanks to you and the National Library Service, I am receiving *True West* each month on tape and enjoying it very much. I hope that your new digs are comfortable.

Since I can't see it, your new format doesn't affect me, so I won't comment on that but I would like to vote on the "Topless" issue.

Dave Phillips
Sacramento, California

We Kid You Not

I want to let you know how great the new magazine looks. I was pleased with the article about the Apache scouts by Captain J.R. Johnson in the November 2000 issue.

If you look closely at the scout line-up at San Carlos on page 35, you will see First Sergeant Kid on the extreme right. This is a little-known photograph of the Apache Kid taken several years before he unjustly became the most wanted outlaw in Arizona's Territorial history. Sad, but true.

Just thought you'd like to know.

Phyllis de la Garza
Willcox, AZ.



Phyllis de la Garza is the author of "The Apache Kid," 1995, Western Lore Press, Tucson, Arizona.



It Is What It Was

As one of the closest living relatives of the Earps, my grandmother was Effie May Earp, my great grandfather, Newton Earp, my great-great-grandfather, Nicolas Porter Earp. I do take exception to all of the hypothetical nonsense written about my family. Let's face it, history is what it is, and 10 seconds after the fact it cannot be changed. So, if all the so-called experts and authors would stick to reporting the facts as they are, then we, the readers, can make up our own minds as to what happened 120 years ago. Thank you, I've needed to get that off my chest for many years. There seems to be, every so often, a new group of Earp slanderers, and the farther removed we get from the incidents the easier they find it to criticize what they do not understand.

H.M. Erdman
Via the Internet

Custer Comments

Your magazine is great, but a whole issue on one person? I know that the Little Bighorn Battle is a true Western event, but a little too much for me. More stories in each issue would sell better, I think. Watch you prove me wrong, though.

Bob Posey
Via the Internet

Hooray! The May/June 2001 edition of *True West* has been my favorite of all issues since I began my subscription. Why? I really like the Native American articles. Kudos to you for "The Great Sioux War," "Crazy Horse" and "Curly and the Little Big Horn"—Keep those Native American features a-comin'.

David Vardeman
Waco Texas

A quick scan of the Custer issue, and the articles in previous issues, have finally convinced me, that for ,you the only story worth telling about the Old West involves Custer.

Custer was not courageous, he was

stupid. He lacked the mental capacity to be prudent, brave and compassionate. Have you ever wondered how many junior officers and enlisted men he condemned to death by his histrionics? He firmly believed he was invincible and would someday become emperor of the United States.

In my youth I knew several OLD men who had known Custer in their youth. None had one good word for him.

I am not a fan of Custer and never have been. The primary reasons for my feeling this way are these: One: I am an American Indian; and, two, I am retired from military service in the United States and during my service I met many great officers, but I also served with a lot of Custers.

HIRAM 2 BEAR
VIA THE INTERNET

I recently picked up the May/June 2001 issue and I must say it is the best issue to date. I'm 19 and have been reading *True West* for about one year now. I never really took an interest in the man, Custer, until this issue. The article by Neil C. Mangum "The Civil War Custer," was outstanding. I, probably like thousands of others, never realized the extent of the roll Custer played in the Civil War. I now see Custer as more of a hero. Thank you for bringing this to light.

CASEY STEJSKAL
WETASKIWIN, ALBERTA, CANADA

Hi. I'd like to mention that you have cleared up a mystery for me. My great-grandfather and his five brothers were all in the Civil War in the Union cavalry. They served under a Captain Custer and I've never been able to find out if this was George, Tom or some other. From your recent article in *True West* on Custer's Civil War record, I realize now they served under George Armstrong.

VAUGHN M. GREENE
VIA THE INTERNET

Feel free to drop us a line, and let us know what you think. Send those letters, funny photos, newspaper clippings and gags to Editor, P.O. Box 8008, Cave Creek, AZ 85327. Email: editor@truewestmagazine.com



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DUCKING BULLETS

RUMORS . . . PROJECTS . . . AND DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS ABOUT THE LATEST IN THE WEST

BY JOHNNY D. BOGGS

And the winner is. . . . Uh, make that winners are. Western Writers of America has announced the winners of the Spur Awards, and the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum has given the Western Heritage Awards for the best Western literature of 2000.

In the WWA nonfiction book categories, **DONALD WORSTER'S** *A River Running West: The Life of John Wesley Powell* (Oxford University Press) took the Spur for biography, **GEOFFREY O'GARA'S** *What You See in Clear Water* (Alfred A. Knopf) won for contemporary, and **DALE WALKER'S** *Pacific Destiny* (Forge Books) won for historical. For young readers, **VIOLET T. KIMBALL'S** *Stories of Young Pioneers in Their Own Words* (Mountain Press) took the juvenile nonfiction.



Dale Walker

Spur.: Nonfiction Heritage Awards went to **ROBERT V. HINE** and **JOHN MACK FARAGHER'S** *The American West A New Interpretive History* (Yale University Press) for Outstanding Nonfiction Book; and **KURT MARKUS'** *Cowpuncher* (Wild Horse Island Press) for Outstanding Art Book.

And we tip our hats to **H.W. PAIGE**, whose "Death Song," which appeared in Roundup magazine, won the Spur for Best Western Short Nonfiction, and Renee Kientz, whose "The Gillette Brothers," which ran in the Houston Chronicle, won the Heritage Award for Outstanding Magazine Article.

For those interested in fiction, may we recommend The Gates of the Alamo? Stephen Harrigan's best-seller from Alfred A. Knopf took the Spur for Best Novel of the West, given to book-length works 90,000 words or longer, and the Heritage for Outstanding Western Novel. **MIKE BLAKELY'S** *Summer of Pearls* (Forge) won for the Spur for Best Western Novel, given for shorter works.

Celebrity hosts for the 40th Western Heritage Awards were actors/brothers **DAVID** and **ROBERT CARRADINE**—no strangers to the Wild West. Heritage Awards also went to *The Virginian* (Turner Network Television) for Outstanding Television Feature Film and "The Real Cowboy: Portrait of an American Icon" (*Time Machine*: The History Channel) for Outstanding Television Documentary. No Spurs were given this year for Best Western Drama or Best Western Documentary.

Awards went to lots of other folks, too, but we're short of space and, heck, I didn't win nothin'. So there. The Heritage winners were honored in Oklahoma City in April, and the Spurs were presented in Idaho Falls, Idaho, in June.



The late Burt Kennedy.

Instead of mourning the passing of a Hollywood legend, we take time to salute the career of **BURT KENNEDY**, who would have celebrated his seventy-ninth birthday September 3. Kennedy, the noted Western director and screenwriter affectionately called "Hollywood's Trail Boss," died of cancer on Feb. 15. As a screenwriter, Kennedy penned several **BUDD BOETTICHER**-directed **RANDOLPH SCOTT** movies, including *The Tall T* (based on an Elmore Leonard short story), *Seven Men from Now* and *Comanche Station*. He also directed **ROBERT MITCHUM** and **GEORGE KENNEDY** in *The Good Guys and the Bad Guys*, **HENRY FONDA** and **GLENN FORD** in *The Rounders*, **JOHN WAYNE** and **KIRK DOUGLAS** in *The War Wagon* and **THE DUKE** again in *The Train Robbers*, but is probably best known for his **JAMES GARNER** comedies, *Support Your Local Sheriff* and *Support Your Local Gunfighter*. His advice to making a good Western: "Always put the hero in a situation where he can leave at any time but chooses to stay," the Muskegon, Michigan native said in 1997. "That makes a stronger story."

Burt Kennedy knew all about strong stories. Rent one of his classics and see for yourself. For a change of pace, catch *Welcome to Hard Times* with Fonda, Kennedy's adaptation of **E.L.** (Ragtime, Billy Bathgate) **DOCTOROW'S** first novel.



True West's *own OK Chorale, barbershop quartet, recently qualified for the Western District Championship competition.*

And what does Deadwood, South Dakota, plan to do to commemorate the 125th anniversary of **JACK MCCALL'S** murder of **WILD BILL HICKOK**? Besides financing the slot machines and blackjack tables, how about visiting the Wild Bill Interpretive Site, sponsored by the Heart of



True West *guest editor, stuntman and Wild Bill look-alike, Thadd Turner, takes a morning ride with son Wyatt.*

Deadwood, which re-creates the card game in progress when Wild Bill was shot in the No. 10 Saloon? Or hang around for the live radio broadcast of the Wild Bill Hickok 125th Anniversary Event, maybe even go to the Days of '76 Rodeo (July 22-29), voted "Best Small Outdoor Rodeo" by the PRCA

for the last three years. Visit any of 'em and you're bound to have a good time.



The Cattle King of New Mexico, John Chisum, by sculptor Robert Summers.

Numbers say that the premiere of *Crossfire Trail* was the most watched and highest rated movie in basic cable television history. The January 21 debut on Turner Network Television was seen in more than 7.7 million households for a 9.6 rating/13.2 share. Of course, words for the Western—starring **TOM SELLECK** (*Quigley, Down Under*), directed by **SIMON WINCER** (*Lonesome Dove*), based on a novel by **LOUIS L'AMOUR** (*Hondo*)—were less than flattering. Not that we always agree with the erudite TV critics. It's always good to see a new Western, even one historically inaccurate, but we side with the TV reporters this time. *Crossfire Trail* was hoss apples.



Kareem Abdul-Jabar, Bobby Carradine and Dennis Weaver at the 2001 Western Heritage awards.

West on the Web: Since we're promotin' Western literature here, why not suggest a couple of internet magazines? Of course, we would highly recommend www.truewestmagazine.com but we're not quite that big a megalomaniac, so two sites worth a hit are www.readthewest.com and www.readwest.com. Both contain author interviews, articles, plus plenty of links and reviews. Happy reading!

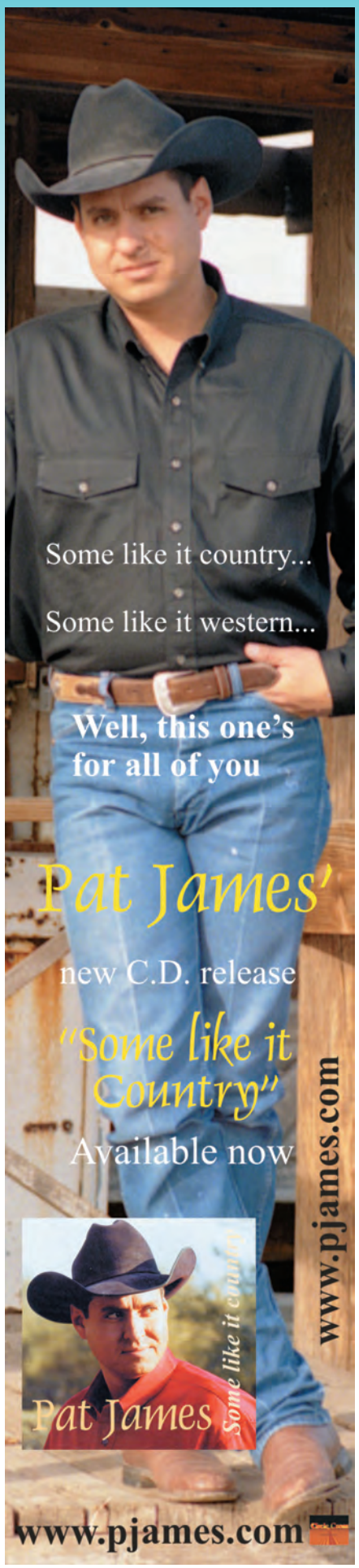
Historian **A.C. GREENE**, whose books include *900 Miles on the Butterfield Trail*, and other West Texas authors are expected to be on hand for the West Texas Book & Author Festival on Saturday, September 22, at the Abilene Civic Center. Programs include work-shops, panel discussions, readings and book signings. The event, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., is being held by the Friends of the Abilene Public Library to raise fundsfor the library.

This fine life-size statue of **JOHN SIMPSON CHISUM** (1824-1884), "the Cattle King of New Mexico" and a longhorned "Jinglebob" steer created by sculptor **ROBERT SUMMERS**, was unveiled in February, 2001,directly opposite the Court House at Fourth and Main Streets in Roswell, New Mexico. It stands (students of Lincoln County history will appreciate the irony) upon the site of the first buildings erected in what became that city circa 1870 by rancher **VAN C. SMITH** and just a few miles north of what used to be Chisum's South Springs ranch.

Bones about Billy: In last month's "Ducking Bullets," **DREW GOMBER**, historian for the Hubbard Museum of the American West, reported an **BILLY THE KID** find:

"The discovery a book which reputedly contains several entries from **BILLY THE KID**, has come under scrutiny in recent months.

"One of the enigma is that all of the entries appear to have been made in Santa Fe while the cover clearly has the word 'Mesilla' on it. The problem, as always, is verification. One serious bone of contention is the signature of **J.W. BELL**, the guard who Billy later killed in Lincoln. Bell's rather rare signature is not easily found, but there *are* copies available and they don't match the signature in the book."



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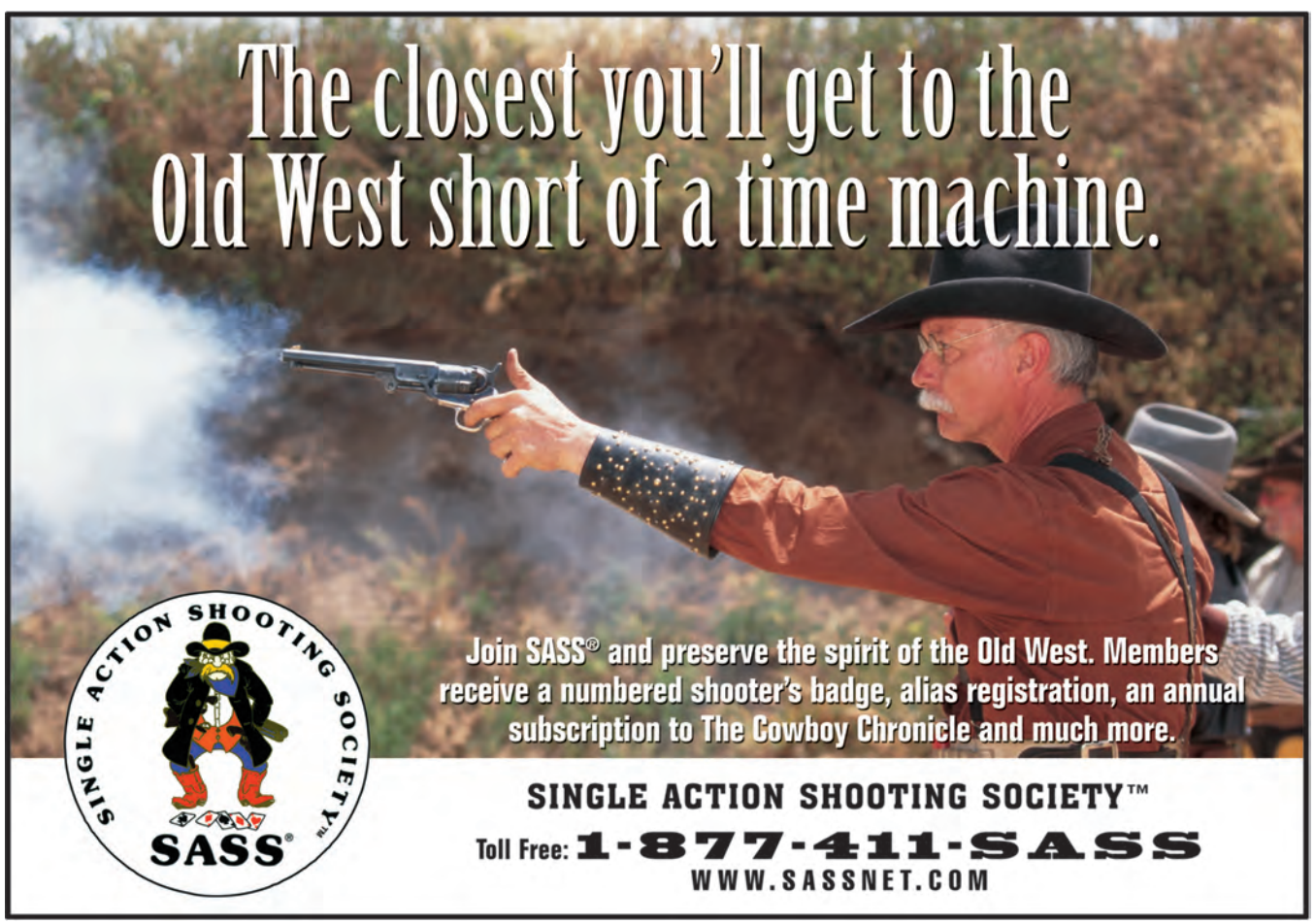


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TRUE WEST READERS' FORUM

Reported by Mare Rosenbaum

Our readers weigh in with ongoing, in-depth, and sometimes heated debate

Do people really fly backward, lifted off their feet when they're shot, like in the movies?

Shot with a Colt Model 1860, this man lives to tell you what really happens

An ongoing debate, here at *True West* was sparked by a November, 2000 letter in response to our August 2000 feature, "The Reel West vs. The Real West." Retired professor, William R. Tonso, commented on the unrealistic depiction of the homesteader, actor Elisha Cook, Jr., being shot in the movie *Shane*.

Firing back (and upping the ante) with two B.A. degrees, U.S. History and Physical Anthropology, an M.A. in U.S. History and a 30-year track record as a gunsmith and outdoor sports writer, Charles J. Cottone responds:

"His [retired professor, William R. Tonso] comparison of that cartridge to a high-power rifle cartridge is itself, "unrealistic." The Colt .45 cartridge of that era traveled at a muzzle velocity of about 690 feet per second (fps). It is a large, fat, flat-tipped bullet made then of soft lead, very soft lead, which traveled at low velocity to its target—like a freight train chugging on. A high-power rifle bullet is more like the Midnight Express train, traveling at high velocities such as 3,000 fps for a 30-06 cartridge. A high-power rifle cartridge fires a long, thin, light bullet traveling at high speeds. I suggest Mr. Tonso read up on an early ballistics expert named Newton who was quite famous in the early twentieth century.

"Upon impact, the effects of the two bullets are very different. Both have to expend the energy imparting speed as that speed is suddenly reduced by impacting upon the target. The slow traveling, heavy bullet will have little 'shock' impact and make a nice big hole without much tissue damage. The small, fast bullet has much more energy to impart and it does so with explosive effect. I suggest Mr. Tonso rent the movie, *Mr. Majestic,* in which the bad guys shoot up Charles Bronson's watermelons . . . the effect is spectacular. . . .

"I am probably one of few people to have been shot in the twentieth-century by a .44 caliber, black powder pistol, which has roughly the same muzzle velocity as the Colt. 45, firing a black powder load.

"One day, while squirrel hunting with my friend Ms. Peachy Speicher (known for her squirrel casseroles) I found it necessary to take a walk to answer nature's call. I walked about 60 feet away to a creek bed, and while concerned with my business, never noticed a man standing 30 or so feet away. When I finally did notice him, . . . he raised his gun and fired at me. The gun was a Colt Model 1860 .44 caliber Army, loaded with lead balls. The ball went through my wool CPO jacket and through the left pocket of my wool Pendleton hunting shirt, imbedding itself into my antique brass cigarette rolling machine I had in my pocket. The impact literally picked me off of my feet—all 200 pounds—and tossed me six to eight feet back. . . . I still have the gun and the bullet."



Legendary Western cartoonist Stan Lynde's classic strip, Rick O'Shay *featured Wild Bill blasting a bad guy out of the saddle.*

- Collection of Bob Boze Bell -

This Account Current

Several readers responded to our ongoing call for answers in the July 2000 feature, "A Smoking Gun" for what "a/c" means. Rich Eaton e-mailed us with this intriguing take:

"I believe it means 'additional charges.' There could be another receipt yet to be discovered that goes along with this one for expenses that the Earp posse charged, or were reimbursed by Wells, Fargo & Company."

Roy B. Young of Young & Sons Enterprises, Historical and Genealogical Publishing weighs in on the opposite side of the argument with the following:

"There is absolutely no evidence that has yet come to light that Wells Fargo wanted either man killed.

"Understanding that 'a/c' means simply 'account current' will explain that John N. Thacker was being reimbursed for his payment to the Earp posse for their expenses in pursuit of Stilwell, Brocius (and likely others of the cowboy element) in prior months. That is the reason why the amount paid was so small.

"I doubt that any part of the money involved payment to the posse for the infamous 'vendetta ride.' If the Behan posse records during this same time can be used as the going rate for services ($10 per day, plus $3 per day for use of their horse, and miscellaneous expenses) then the amount Thacker paid for the six to eight men in the Earp posse would cover only about two days."

WILD BILL PRINCE OF THE

CO-EDITED BY JOSEPH G. ROSA & THADD M. TURNER

Even in his own time, they called him "Wild Bill." And, though this August marks the 125th anniversary of his murder, Wild Bill Hickok is ever immortal. As Thadd Turner and I are both devoted to separating the myth from the fact about his legend, it is fitting that *True West*—also dedicated to presenting the truth about the Old West—should mark the event.



A fan of the magazine since the 1950s, and having spent more years than I care to remember researching and writing about Wild Bill, I was delighted when Thadd and Bob Boze Bell asked me to guest edit this special issue.

Like all larger-than-life individuals, Hickok was the kind of man who inspired adulation in some and aroused bitterness and resentment in others. In short, he was an enigma, which is one reason why I have pursued the truth about him for so long. Wild Bill deserved his reputation, but not the media-inspired "man-killer" role for which most people remember him—his killings were in single figures, and at times, he showed a compassion that was rare among gunfighters.

James Butler Hickok fought diligently for the Union Army, scouted the open plains for Custer, and provided necessary law enforcement to Hays City and Abilene. Hickok was an actor, media personality, and had killed men. He never slept with Calamity Jane, and was a happily married man on the day he was assassinated.

I, therefore, hope that the readers of *True West* will find much profit and entertainment in our presentation of Wild Bill Hickok, the legend and the man.

— Joseph G. Rosa



THE REAL WILD BILL

BY JOSEPH G. ROSA



"WILD BILL," declared General George Armstrong Custer in 1872, "was a Plainsman in every sense of the word, yet unlike any other of his class." And where most of his contemporaries were dressed in keeping with the terrain over which they operated, Wild Bill blended "the immaculate neatness of the dandy with the extravagant taste and style of the frontiersman," which befitted the man Custer regarded as "the most famous scout of the Plains."

Even when divested of his plainsman's furs and buckskins, Hickok's garb remained dandified: colored vests or waistcoats, fashionable jackets with broad lapels, and boiled white shirts with cravat or tie; his high-heeled boots were worn with the tops inside his trousers; the whole was surmounted by a broad-brimmed flat-crowned white or black sombrero-type hat. In his later years, Hickok also sported a fashionable cane. At such times, of course, his pistols were tactfully kept out of sight. However, when employed in peace-keeping duties in such places as Hays City or Abilene, his dandified image gave way to more practical dress and, during the summer months, he was often seen wandering around in shirt sleeves with his two holstered Colt Navy pistols, butts forward, prominently displayed.

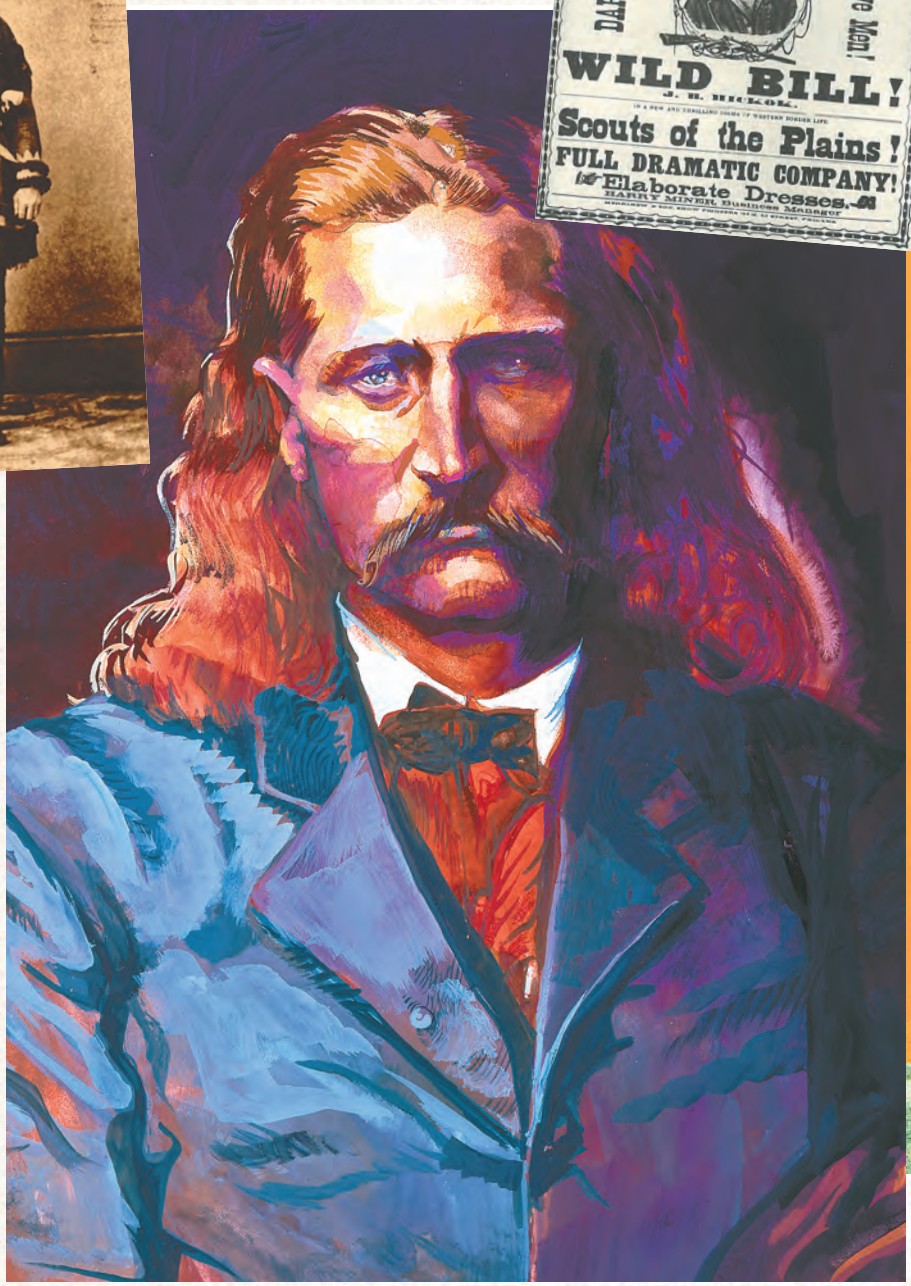
James Butler Hickok's physical appearance and bearing was eagerly seized upon in an article published in the February 1867 *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* by Colonel George Ward Nichols and the Welsh-born Henry M. Stanley (who, in a couple of years, would immortalize himself with the greeting, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?"). Photographic and written descriptions of Wild Bill indicate that he stood over six feet tall, was broad shouldered, narrow waisted and wore his auburn hair shoulder length in the manner of the plainsmen. Curiously, his moustache was straw-colored, its length dictated by fashion. His features, too, were distinctive: a broad forehead, high cheekbones, aquiline nose, strong chin and long jawbones; all dominated by a pair of blue-gray eyes that in normal discourse were benign and friendly, though when he was aroused by danger became coldly implacable.

Wild Bill's reputation as a gunfighter naturally included his ability to get a pistol into action "as quick as thought," but in reality, speed was probably the last thing on his mind. Hickok told Colonel Nichols that one should take time and not be hurried, which meant that reaction to a situation counted far more than speed—when Hickok went

THE REAL WILD BILL







for his pistols he had already anticipated the outcome.

If we ignore Hickok's leg-pulling, his elevation from noted scout and plainsman to the most notorious man-killer on the border remains a mystery. A cursory examination discloses that he did not deserve such a reputation. Between 1861 and 1871—the period which covers his pistol-wielding ventures—there are only seven authenticated killings involving Hickok. He may (or may not), have shot David C. McCanles at Rock Creek in July 1861, yet it was four years later in July 1865 that he shot it out with Dave Tutt at Springfield. There was then another gap until August 1869 when as acting sheriff of Ellis County, Kansas, he shot and killed Bill Mulvey (or Mulrey) and Samuel Strawhun in September. Ten months later in July 1870, again at Hays, he shot two Seventh Cavalry Troopers in a saloon brawl, killing one and wounding the other. And finally, in October 1871, at Abilene, when attempting to deal with a large band of drunken Texas cowboys, he shot Phil Coe and also his own friend Mike Williams who stepped into the line of fire—a far cry from the "considerably over a hundred" so-called bad men Hickok is said to have killed.

In hindsight, however, it is understandable why such outrageous stories were not denied, especially when Hickok himself rarely gave interviews. Few people got to know the real man or any facts about him, and it is only by examining comments from those who actually knew Hickok, and his own rare letters to the press, that we can get some idea of his true character. From these excursions we learn that he enjoyed books, feminine company, good conversation and socializing. He also displayed a good knowledge of the West, and he was considered an expert on the guerrilla warfare that had pervaded parts of Kansas, Missouri and Arkansas during the late war.

Following his appearance in *Harper's*, Hickok, along with a number of other plainsmen, was hired to scout for the Seventh



Whereas Buffalo Bill was drawn to the stage, Hickok quickly realized that it was not for him and, following a number of disputes with his co-stars over his pranks on stage, he quit in March 1874. Hickok returned West accompanied by $1,000 and a pair of .44 caliber Smith & Wesson "American" revolvers presented by Cody and partner Omohundro as parting gifts.

- COURTESY OF THE BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER, CODY, WYOMING -

*"Many men swore to kill him,
some with a real or imagined grievance,
and others seeking a cheap reputation as his killer.
Few of them would dare meet him face-to-face."*



By 1872, Hickok had abandoned both the Plains and stints as a peace officer, and instead took up gambling both as a profession and as a pastime. He also engaged in other pursuits, among them acting as a guide for tourists or hunters and, in an historic appearance at Niagara Falls, was a master of ceremonies for the "Grand Buffalo Hunt." This was a financial disaster, but the public's reaction to Hickok probably influenced him when he accepted an offer from Buffalo Bill to join his theatrical Combination *a year later. One suspects that the large salary tempted Wild Bill rather than the publicity involved.*

In 1872, Ned Buntline's play Buffalo Bill Cody *was based upon Hickok's adventures, as was his 1869 novel* Buffalo Bill, King of the Border Men. *Hickok is reported to have refused to speak to Buntline, so Ned turned to Cody. It was when Buntline and Cody ended their partnership because of a disagreement over profits, that Buffalo Bill persuaded Hickok to join him and Texas Jack Omohundro.*



Cavalry, sent into action against hostile Indians in Kansas in the spring and summer of 1867. Hickok soon achieved a reputation as an Indian scout, but unlike his myth, Wild Bill did not ride a prancing mare called Black Nell. Instead, he rode a fine Army mule which was better than a horse over rough country. Some even thought mules to be the equal of the fleet Indian ponies. Indeed, on one occasion when he ran out of supplies, Custer ordered Hickok to ride by night on a fresh mule to request supply wagons to be sent to his command.

Between military engagements, Hickok served as a deputy U.S. marshal in Kansas, and in 1869 he was elected acting sheriff of Ellis county, making Hays City his headquarters. Later, in 1871, he was appointed marshal of Abilene during its last season as a cowtown. Hickok was not a professional peace officer, but took the job seriously, and some described him as a "terror to evil-doers."

Wild Bill Hickok is one of America's foremost frontier folk heroes, but the real man remains controversial. To some he was heroic, and to others an overbearing bully, a braggart and, by others, called a coward—but never to his face. In contradiction to the latter opinion stands the trust placed in him by various army officers, two United States marshals, and the people who employed him as a lawman. Make no mistake, Wild Bill had his faults, but he was also a man of character, integrity, courage and action, and for that he deserves his reputation.

Wild Bill was still in Springfield when, in February 1873, it was reported that he had been murdered by Texans at Fort Dodge. A number of sympathetic obituaries had appeared before Hickok himself announced that reports of his death were premature, but for the benefit of the Kansas City papers he declared: "I am dead!" He also seized the opportunity to take a swipe at Ned Buntline, whose abortive attempts to kill him off with his pen had failed, and "having failed, he is now, so I am told, trying to have it done by some Texans, but he has signally failed so far."

Back in Kansas City in the summer of 1874, Wild Bill resumed his gambling and occasional ventures as a scout and guide for hunters and tourists. Later, he moved to Cheyenne and, over the following 18 months,

THE REAL WILD BILL

When scouting for Custer, Wild Bill did not ride a prancing mare called Black Nell. Instead, he rode a fine Army mule—better than a horse over rough country.





also spent time in St. Louis. On March 5, 1876, he married Agnes Lake Thatcher in Cheyenne. They first met in 1871 when he was marshal of Abilene and her circus played in town. They kept in touch by mail, and their decision to marry was welcomed by Hickok's friends and the local press. After a short honeymoon, Hickok left Agnes in Cincinnati with relatives and returned West, promising to send for her when he was settled. Unfortunately, they never met again, for Wild Bill met his untimely death at the hands of back-shooting Jack McCall on the afternoon of Wednesday August 2, 1876.

It will always be, however, his real and imaginary skill with a pistol and his disputed man-killing reputation that will be best remembered. That he was an excellent pistol shot is no longer in doubt, though one could be forgiven for doubting some of the "miraculous" feats that defy man and weapon. Yet they form a part of the legend of a man who, despite his faults and weaknesses, stood head and shoulders above many of his contemporaries, and displayed a strength of character that set him apart. Many men swore to kill him, some with a real or imagined grievance, and others seeking a cheap reputation as his killer. Few of them would dare meet him face-to-face. While they are now obscure and long forgotten, Wild Bill Hickok in all his guises, as both hero and a frontier icon, remains.



Old Trail Town

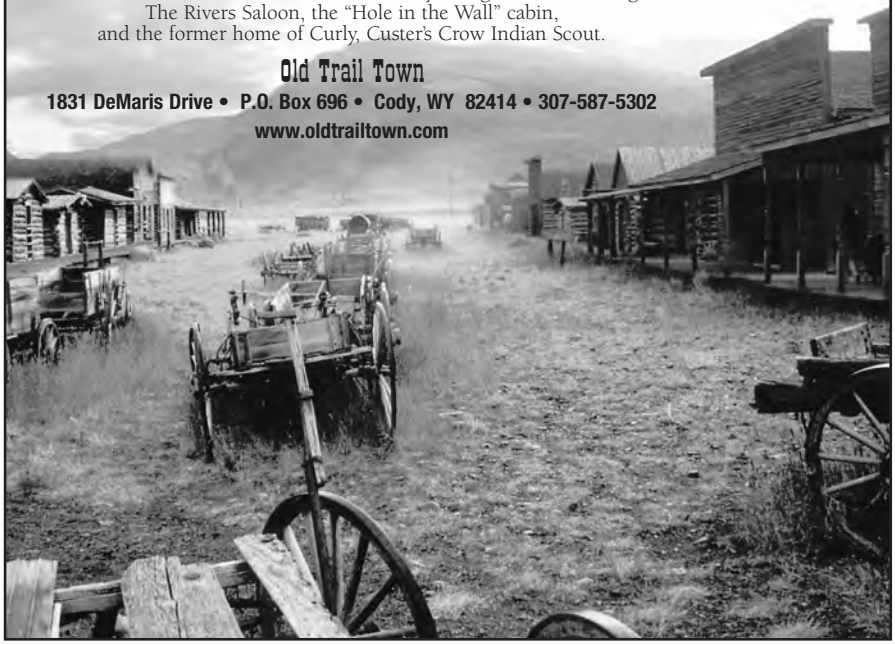
CODY WYOMING

Home of Buffalo Bill Cody

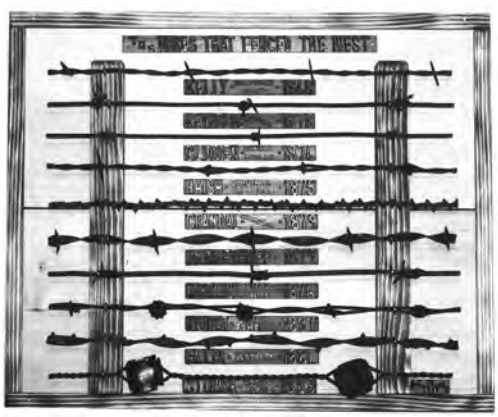
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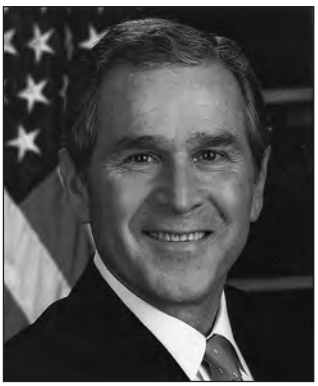


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President George W. Bush

Wild Bill and George W. Bush: Researcher Seein' "W"

SAR grants honorary membership to Hickok

Announced in the April 18 South Dakota *Northern Hills Advertiser*, Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) member Dennis L. Lorensen of Lead, South Dakota, has identified eight of Hickok's ancestors as major players in the American Revolution. More interesting still, Lorensen says Wild Bill himself is a distant relative of President George W. Bush's family. "President Bush and Wild Bill are related through the Butler and Kingsley families. Wild Bill's mother was Polly Butler." (*See Historical Twins, page 80.*) "The Kingsleys are also in her ancestry and in the Bush ancestry; they have many lines in common in colonial New England," said Lorensen in an e-mail to *True West* this week.

After granting honorary, posthumous membership to James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok at its April 7 annual meeting, the SAR decided that later this year they will be placing a marker on Hickok's grave at Mount Moriah Cemetery in Deadwood.

The SAR presented Lorensen with a Meritorious Service Medal at the conclusion of the meeting, recognizing his many hours of research on this project and his dedication to genealogical investigation.

From Troy Grove to the Tin Star

BY JOSEPH G. ROSA

Long before he became acting sheriff of Ellis County, Kansas, and later marshal of Abilene, also Kansas, James Butler Hickok had served in several law enforcement capacities. His first appointment was as one of four constables elected early in 1858 by the citizens of Monticello, Johnson County, Kansas, to serve the local magistrates. Then came the Civil War.

"William Hickok" as he was known to most of his companions during the War before the more familiar "Wild Bill" earned him notoriety in southwest Missouri and parts of Arkansas, rendered "signal service" to the Union. In fact, General John B. Sanborn, who commanded the District of Southwest Missouri, in later years declared that Hickok was the best and coolest scout he had.

Colonel George Ward Nichols' article on "Wild Bill" published in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in February 1867, contained some fiction, but it did describe some of Hickok's real activities behind enemy lines, and prompted editorial comment in a number of Kansas and Missouri newspapers, together with statements from those who knew the real Hickok. For the historian, however, unraveling fact from fiction is a task far from finished, yet one thing is certain—Hickok was a resourceful individual who got himself out of a number of hazardous situations during and following the conflict.

Hickok first entered government service as a wagonmaster in the fall of 1861 and served until September 1862. There is then a gap until early 1864 when he is listed as a provost marshal's police detective. It is this missing period that is of most concern, for it covers the time when, according to *Harper's,* he scouted for General Curtis in Arkansas. Perhaps he did (that claim is still under investigation); but recent research, backtracking from 1864 reveals that his employment by the provost marshal at Springfield probably began sometime in 1863. In this capacity, Wild Bill carried out sometimes bizarre tasks. Some of these included visiting saloons to check on the number of soldiers drinking when they should have been on duty; or investigating the activities of known liquor dealers who did not have a license.

On occasion, "William" Hickok (curiously, no one seems to have questioned the fact that he signed himself J.B. Hickok on official documents) was also ordered into parts of Missouri and Arkansas, under secret orders, in pursuit of wanted individuals. One time, Detective Hickok was ordered into a Missouri township near Springfield to obtain $1,000 in cash from a wanted individual and two of his companions. Hickok was also to make an inventory of their property to that amount. Not surprisingly, Hickok reported back that nothing was achieved as all three men had disappeared.

By April 1864, Hickok had had enough of chasing shadows and miscreant soldiery, and on April 2, at his own request, he was transferred to the quartermaster and reengaged as a scout. In June, Sanborn enlisted him. Hickok was paid five dollars a day and was supplied with a horse and equipment, which presumably included firearms. From then on, the "Wild Bill" of *Harper's* and the real Hickok blended together to embark upon a period of scouting and spying that has become legendary.

Following the end of the war, and the much publicized shoot-out at Springfield with his erstwhile friend Davis K. Tutt on July 21, 1865, Hickok was at a loose end.

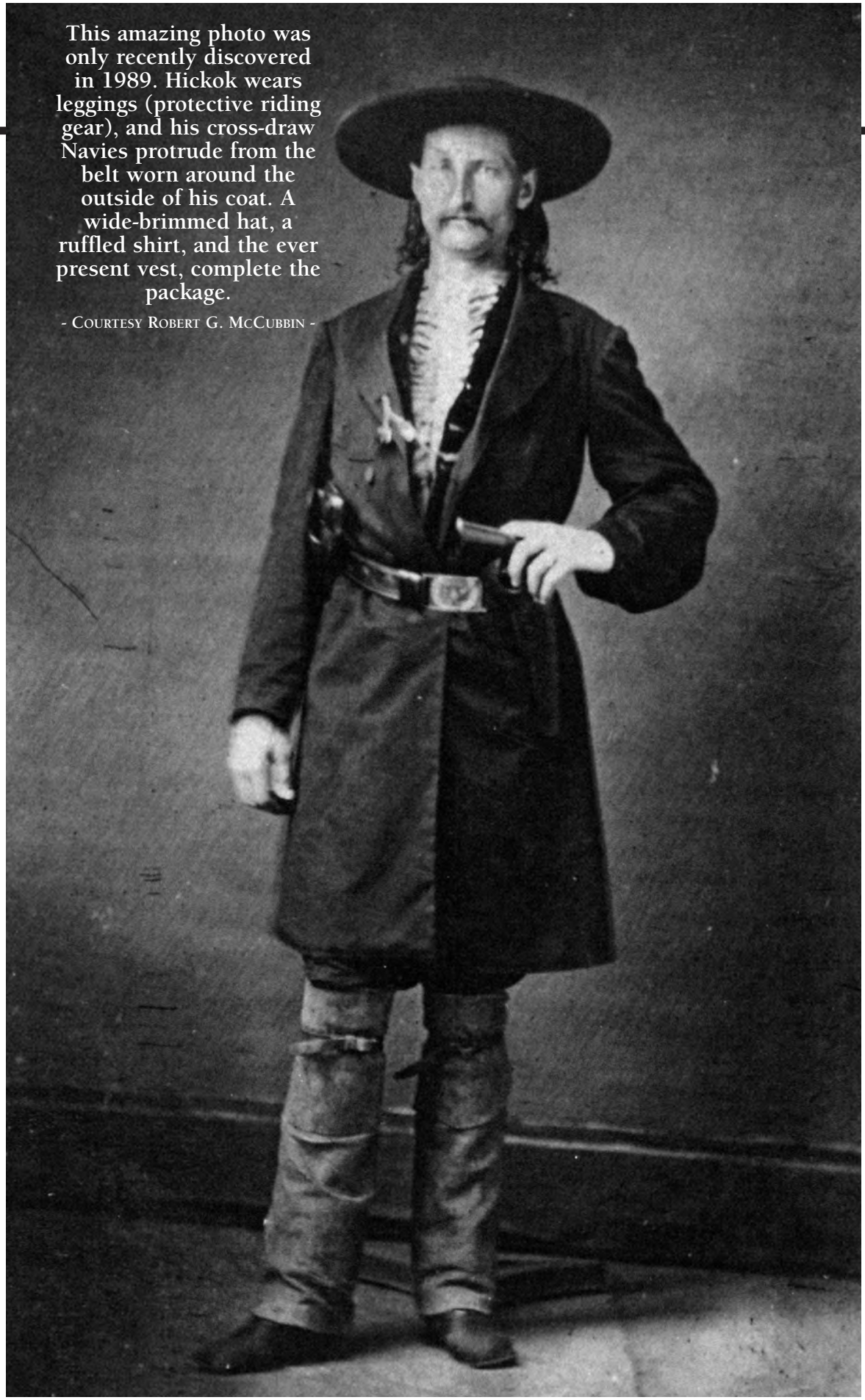


Wild Bill Hickok, far left in white hat, was a deputy U.S. Marshal when this photograph was taken by Alexander Gardner at Fort Harker, Kansas, around September 1867.

– Courtesy Anthony Garnett –

Late in January 1866, however, his old quartermaster, Captain Richard Bentley Owen, immortalized in *Harper's* as "Captain Honesty," was transferred from Springfield to become quartermaster in Fort Riley. He sent for Hickok and appointed him government detective to "hunt up public property," for which he was paid the princely sum of $125 a month (later reduced to $75). In this capacity, Hickok tracked down deserters and others who had "misappropriated" government mules and horses. Hickok proved his worth.

In May 1866, Wild Bill was detached



This amazing photo was only recently discovered in 1989. Hickok wears leggings (protective riding gear), and his cross-draw Navies protrude from the belt worn around the outside of his coat. A wide-brimmed hat, a ruffled shirt, and the ever present vest, complete the package.

- Courtesy Robert G. McCubbin -

from the post to guide General William T. Sherman and party to Fort Kearny, Nebraska. Oddly, in the 1880s Sherman wrote to Buffalo Bill Cody reflecting upon the trip and his admiration for him. Cody promptly published the letter in his show programs, though he was well aware that Sherman had gotten his "Bills" mixed up, for in May 1866 Cody was still in Leavenworth. At Fort Kearny, General John S. Pope, then engaged Hickok as his guide to Santa Fe. Hickok returned to Fort Riley in September.



Deputy U.S. Marshal James Butler Hickok in 1867, photo taken in Leavenworth, Kansas. Note the ornate watch fob and chain.

– COURTESY JOSEPH G. ROSA –

General Hancock's campaign against hostile Indians in Kansas early in 1867, led to Hickok being transferred from detective work to scouting for Lt. Col. Custer's Seventh Cavalry. He served Custer until July 31 when hostilities ceased. Within weeks it was reported that he had been appointed as a deputy United States marshal.

Some have claimed that Hickok was appointed deputy U. S. marshal at Fort Riley as early as 1866, but no documentary proof has been found. Rather, available records unearthed in Washington indicate that Charles C. Whiting, the newly appointed U. S. marshal for the District of Kansas, appointed Hickok to deputy in August 1867.

According to official records (there are some gaps), Hickok served intermittently as a deputy between 1867 and 1870, and earned in excess of $1,000 in fees and expenses. He was now involved in Federal rather than civil cases. These included desertions from the army, horse and mule thefts, illicit liquor sales and counterfeiting U. S. currency. The earliest case found to date involving Hickok was in October 1867 when he arrested one James Quinlin who had been subpoenaed to appear in Topeka in the case of the United States vs. John Reynard, the charge—counterfeiting.

When Hickok arrested a man named John Hurst, Marshal Whiting and Deputy U. S. Marshal B. Searcy were called as witnesses. Late in 1867, both he and Hickok were featured in an amusing comment in the short-lived Ellsworth *Tri-Weekly Advertiser*. In the first issue dated December 25, the editor remarked that when he came to move his printing press into the new office he needed some assistance, and Hickok and "Captain Searcy" offered to help. "If some of our printer friends had seen Wild Bill take hold of the heavy fly-wheel of our Wells' Power Press and lift it over the stair step bannister - two and a half feet high - they would exclaim appropriately and westernly, 'bully for Bill.'"

Counterfeiting was a lucrative pastime, and in 1870, Hickok himself was a victim. In Junction City he roomed with a man named James Atkinson. Atkinson blithely informed Hickok that he had been in the habit of passing dud money, but if it was recognized he took it back. Wild Bill was not impressed. Unfortunately for Atkinson, one such note which he had circulated at a race track in Missouri, was passed to Hickok. Wild Bill was furious. His inquiries led to Atkinson, and he immediately filed a complaint and swore out a warrant. Learning that Atkinson had fled to Abilene, Hickok set off in pursuit. It is likely that he enlisted the aid of Abilene's marshal, Thomas J. "Bear River" Smith, in locating his quarry. (Smith was murdered in November which, ironically, paved the way for Hickok's own appointment as marshal of Abilene later in April 1871). However, when counterfeiter Atkinson finally came to trial in October, the case was not fully prosecuted; he escaped imprisonment, and doubtless made himself scarce.

During 1868-70 Hickok was involved in several horse and mule theft cases. In March 1868, when Marshal Whiting learned that the army had some alleged horsethieves in custody at Fort Hays, he wrote to the commanding officer on March 19 and



This tintype of Wild Bill was made about 1863. In 1864, he was employed as a special policeman, and later attached to Brigadier General John B. Sanborn's headquarters at Springfield, Missouri.

– NATIONAL ARCHIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY ETHEL HICKOK –

". . . he made the appearance of just such a picture as one could see on the cover of a dime novel. . . ."

requested that he "notify Mr. J.B. Hickok at Hays City who will promptly respond to your notice." Nine days later, Hickok himself wrote to the post commander requesting a guard to help him convey his prisoners to Topeka. Accompanying Hickok on this occasion was his longtime friend William F. Cody, not yet generally known as "Buffalo Bill." Cody was a government detective who had been ordered in pursuit of a gang of thieves—some were thought to be the men in custody at Fort Hays. Hickok, Cody and a military escort delivered the men safely to jail in Topeka ,where they eventually went on trial.

In May 1869, shortly after returning from a visit to his mother's home in Illinois, Hickok was ordered to Fort Wallace to escort two alleged horse thieves and two witnesses to Topeka. The men, Silas Baker and Willard Curtis, were later sentenced to four-and-a-half years in the state penitentiary.

In Topeka, however, Hickok learned that an incident at Ellsworth in March, threatened his own future as a deputy U. S. marshal. A number of Pawnee Indians were killed by local residents who feared that they would go on the rampage. Three of those alleged to be involved were reported to be Deputy U. S. Marshals John S. Park, Chauncey B. Whitney and B. Searcy (sometimes spelled Circey). The deputies had tried to ease the situation and arrest the Indians for their own protection, but the subsequent shooting led to U.S. Marshal Whiting being called to account for their actions. In defense of his deputies he described Park and Whitney as good men, but for a reason not disclosed, said that Searcy was not in his employ and that he was a "man of bad character. One of the worst, in fact, to be found on the Western border of Kansas."



Wild Bill's Remorse: *When Hickok mistakenly shot and killed his friend and part time jailer, Mike Williams, it affected him deeply. In addition to paying for William's funeral and personally apoligizing to Mike's widow. Hickok never again worked as a lawman.*

– BBB –

The ax fell, and on May 19 Whiting was dismissed. In the months that followed, his health deteriorated and on January 2, 1870, he died, a much maligned and mourned individual. In his place, however, the government appointed Dana W. Houston who made it his first task to interview all Whiting's deputies and many of those appointed by the district court. Many were fired, but Hickok was among those Houston retained.

Between his duties as the acting sheriff of Ellis County in the fall of 1869, Wild Bill continued to act as a deputy U. S. marshal. In November he obtained a warrant for the arrest of illegal timber cutters reported to be at work on Paradise Creek, some miles from Fossil Creek Station (present day Russell). Arriving by train, Hickok hired a horse and set out. Years later, Adolph Roenigk recalled that when Wild Bill stepped off the train, he "wore a broad brimmed hat and a brand new buckskin suit with fringes on his elbow sleeves and trouser legs. A pair of sixshooters strapped to his sides, he made the appearance of just such a picture as one could see on the cover of a dime novel. . . ." However, with the help of First Lieutenant L. W. Cooke of the Third Infantry, Wild Bill arrested John Hobbs, Charles Hamilton and Charles Vernon, who were all taken to Topeka. The outcome of the trial is not known, or for that matter, if one actually took place, though Hobbs was a well-known character in Hays City in the late 1870s.

Time will doubtless disclose more information on Hickok's services in law enforcement, but from what we have learned so far, there is little doubt that Wild Bill was indeed a useful and reliable individual in whatever capacity he was called upon to act.

Hats Off—And On Hickok

Wild Bill wore many different hats—both figuratively and literally—in his storied life.

In addition to the known photo images shown here, he probably wore a variety of other style headgear as well, especially during his spy period in the Civil War.

Keep in mind, in addition to lawman, scout and gambler, Hickok took a turn at being a celebrity showman, miner, freighter and lady-killer.



Around 1858

- Courtesy Ethel Hickok -



About 1868, apparently, Hickok had a thing for checked pants (they show up often in his photos).

- Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society -



Circa 1874, taken in New York during his full-blown celebrity.

- Courtesy Denver Public Library -



About 1863-'64

- Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society -



1868-70

- Courtesy of Joseph Rosa -







The photo above, left, shows Hickok in a slouch hat, while above, center, we see Wild Bill in his show biz hat, and above, right, Wild Bill looks the ruffian, with a short brimmed job. The center photo was discovered in an album compiled between 1863 and 1900. Another interesting point about Wild Bill's apparel style, is that even though it is popularly believed he tucked his pants into his boot tops, all of the extant photos of Hickok show him with his pants outside his boots (leggings being the only exception, see page 19).

- Center photo Courtesy Buffalo Bill Historical Center; the other two are courtesy of Joseph Rosa -



1867

- Courtesy Anthony Garnett -

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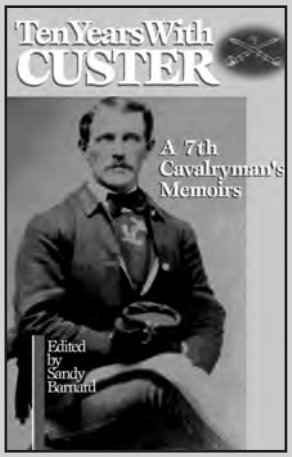
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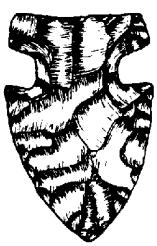


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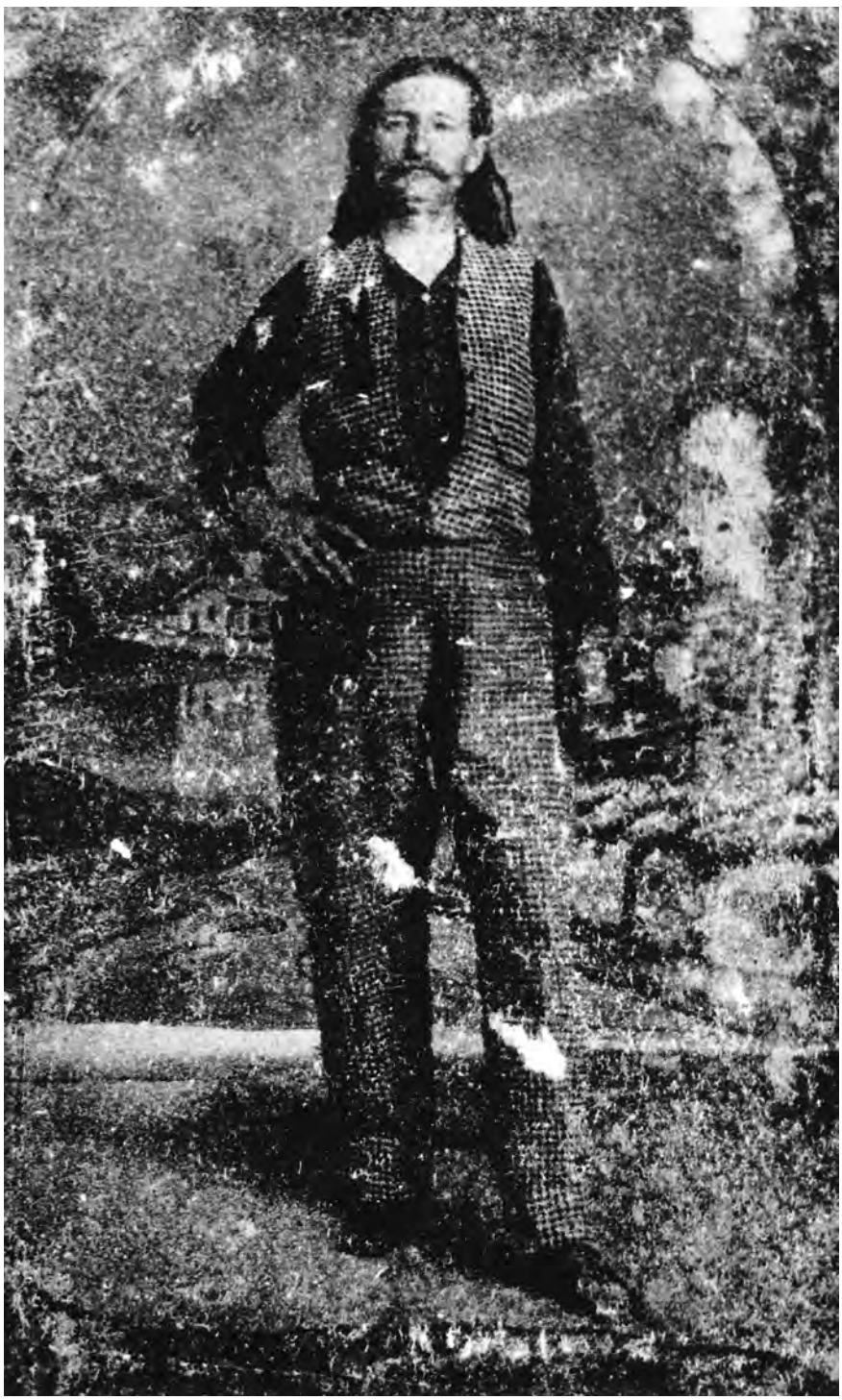
A PISTOLEER Poet?

James Butler Hickok proved on numerous occasions that he was neither gun nor camera shy, and his attraction to the opposite sex is also well known. But few would have imagined that he might also have been a . . . poet? This possibility came to light in September 1985, when I received a call from an art dealer, then located in San Antonio, Texas, to ask if I would examine a tintype photograph alleged to be Wild Bill, together with an accompanying "poem" thought to have been written by him. Intrigued, I readily agreed, and copies of both items were mailed to me.

At a glance, the photograph needed little comment, for despite some damage, the image was undoubtedly that of James Butler Hickok. The poem, however, was another matter. My initial reaction was that it might have been written by Hickok, but later I had doubts. Written in pencil, it was discovered inside the leather case that contained the photograph.

The dealer and I corresponded on the subject, and in a telephone conversation shortly before both items were put up for auction, I said that after some consideration I was not convinced that Hickok actually wrote the poem; the handwriting differed from known specimens, and it was most unusual for Hickok to sign his full name—the only known examples were found in several letters written home from Kansas in the 1850s. All other versions examined are signed "J.B. Hickok." Despite my reservations, however, I said I would keep an open mind, and suggested that at some point a professional handwriting expert be called in to examine the document. (So far as I know, this has not been done.) Although the poem is undated, a reference to Springfield, Missouri, established where the lady either received it, or the plate was made, and gave me a place to start my search.

Hickok was a familiar figure in Springfield during the Civil War. He was also well known in Rolla and other parts of southwest Missouri and Arkansas, where he served variously as a wagonmaster, provost



The tintype. This is a mirror image and should be reversed to get the correct image. Note the watch chain and the steer's head ribbon on his lapel. The tintype and poem were found in a leather case. Hickok's initials "J.B.H." were written inside the case. In size, the tintype is 3 1/2" x 2 1/8", and on its reverse bears the scratched-in numerals "42" at the upper left corner, and "3480" at the lower left. Besides the initials J.B.H., something else is written that is indistinct.

– Courtesy of Bob McCubbin –

BY JOSEPH G. ROSA

marshal's detective, and a government scout and spy. His brother Lorenzo, himself a government wagonmaster, occasionally met up with James either at Springfield or Rolla.

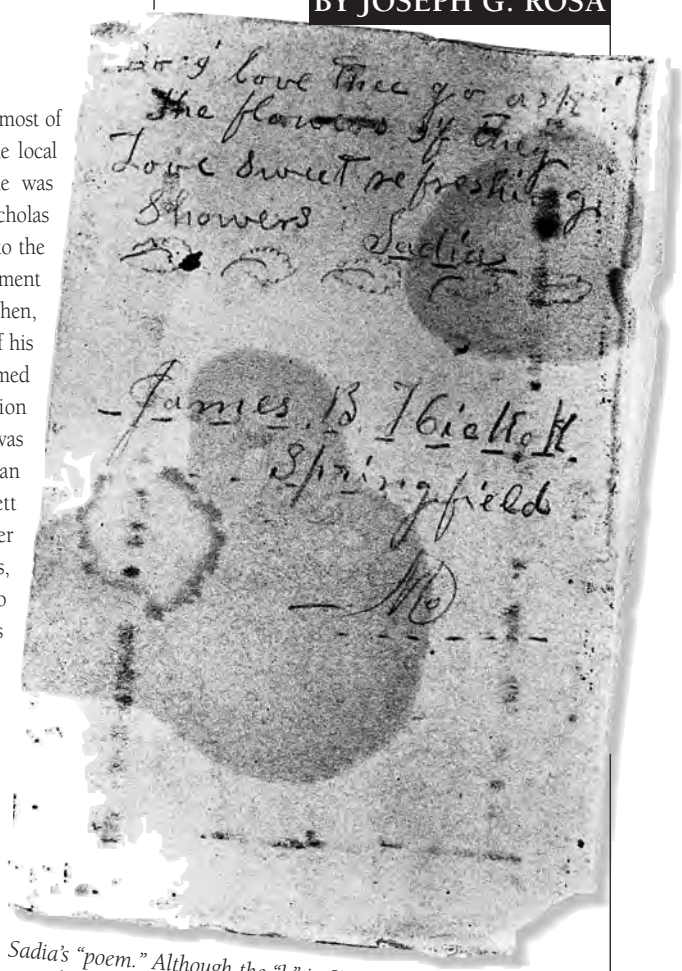
On September 10, 1864, writing from Rolla to his brother Horace at Troy Grove, Illinois, Lorenzo advised him that James had paid him a four-day visit and that "he was going to have his Photograph taken while here but it was stormy all the time[.] Says he will send me some in a few days[.] if he does I will send one Home." This suggests that James would provide paper prints or *cartes de visite* size photographs rather than a tintype since Lorenzo refers to *some* rather than *one*.

By now, I realized that my efforts to track down both the photographer and the author of the accompanying poem would not be easy. My questions concerning the discovery of the tintype and the poem revealed that they were purchased in 1965 at an unidentified estate sale in Austin, Texas, and they had remained in a private collection until 1985.

A close examination of the tintype has revealed that Hickok wears a watch chain that disappears into a side pocket of his vest or *waistcoat*. But the most interesting feature, is the appearance of a masonic or other type of ribbon on his breast, surmounted by what seems to be a steer or a buffalo head. Exactly what this is remains a mystery, but perhaps Hickok was showing off his emblem rather than just posing for another portrait.

Some may ask why, at a time when paper prints and glass plates were readily available, would this portrait be a tintype? Despite such advances in technique, tintypes were cheaper and remained popular until the 1940s.

Fortunately, Hickok's movements for the period 1872-73 are better recorded, which helps us to date this photograph. Following the decision of the Abilene town council on December 13, 1871, that Hickok's services as City Marshal were no longer required (they were about to ban the cattle trade and all its "evils"), by December 15, Wild Bill had moved to Kansas City where he was to remain for most of the coming year. A search of the local city directories revealed that he was listed as a boarder at the St. Nicholas Hotel, and was a regular visitor to the Marble Hall gambling establishment where he played poker or faro. Then, in July 1872, at the suggestion of his friend Major Frank North, the famed leader of the Pawnee Battalion during the Indian wars, Hickok was approached by the Canadian museum owner Sidney Barnett with an offer to appear as a Master of Ceremonies at Niagara Falls, Ontario, in a "Grand Buffalo Chase." Featuring local Indians and buffalo, the show took place at Niagara Falls on August 28 and 30.



Sadia's "poem." Although the "k" in Hickok bears a superficial resemblance to Hickok's, it was written in the style of the time.
– Courtesy of Fred Kline –

Back in Kansas City on September 27, soon after, Hickok set course for Springfield, Mo. He may have decided he needed a change, or perhaps he was among a number of gamblers and others deemed undesirable by the town council which ordered Marshal Speers to remove them.

My first task, of course, was to confirm Hickok's arrival in the city late in 1872. I concluded that he would have traveled there via the Atlantic and Pacific Rail Road link established between Kansas City and Springfield in 1870, but my questions concerning his date of arrival drew a blank. No one had seen any mention of him in the newspapers, and he did not appear in the city directories. I thought this odd, but decided to look anyway. I was, therefore, delighted to find that in the 1873 edition, one "J. B. Hicoh" was listed as a boarder at the St. James Hotel. A librarian, who had been working on the directories as part of a census exercise, told me that Hickok (by now there was no doubt that it was him) must have arrived in the city either late in September or October 1872 in order to qualify for entry in the 1873 directory.

Having established Hickok's presence at Springfield, I again turned my attention to the vexed question of the "poem" and its relation to Wild Bill. Back in 1985, my misgivings about the alleged Hickok signature were heightened by my reaction to the poem. Still uncertain, I brought up the subject with my friend and co-author, the late Robin May. I asked him if it might have something to do with William Shakespeare. Robin, an expert on the bard, said no, but did suggest that I look at the works of John Godfrey Saxe because something about the poem reminded him of a similar work by Saxe. So, in October 1985, during a visit to the Kansas State Historical Society at Topeka, I enlisted the aid of the ladies in the Society's library. They soon produced a copy of Saxe's poem "Do I



These Hickok signatures are similar to others found on public documents in the National Archives in Washington and Kansas City, together with a recently discovered signature on a document at Springfield.

– Courtesy the National Archives –

love Thee?" and a comparison of both poems revealed similarities. Here follows both the version found with the tintype and the last verse of Saxe's original poem:

Do I love thee go ask
The flowers if they
Love sweet refreshing
Showers.
Sadia

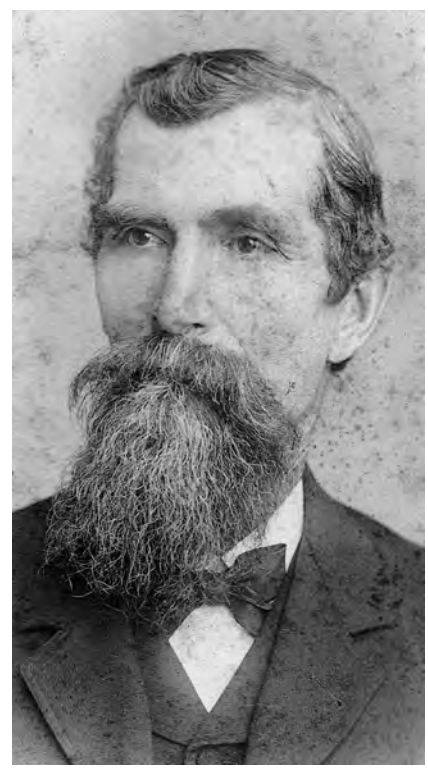
And the Saxe original:

Do I love thee? Ask the flower
If she loves the vernal shower,
Or the kisses of the sun,
Or the dew, when day is done.
As she answers, Yes or No,
Darling! Take my answer so.

Then came the big surprise: "Who was the woman who wrote this?" asked the ladies when they looked at the Hickok version of the poem. I explained that it had been alleged that Hickok himself wrote it. They shook their heads. "That was written by a woman, for it is obviously a feminine hand and the flowery drawings are a definite feminine touch." Their reaction made a lot of sense, and suggested a fresh interpretation of both the poem and its author. One could easily imagine that Hickok presented the photograph to the lady in question who, in turn, added the verse, and identified Hickok and the place where she acquired it. Before reaching such a conclusion, I had to learn more of the mysterious "Sadia," and what might have happened to her. Hickok's relationships with women are legion, and perhaps lovesick Sadia was one of several women who attracted his attention during his period at Springfield. If so, we must again ask who she was. And here we have a problem.

The 1870 census (the closest one available to the 1872-73 period) failed to find any ladies named "Sadie" or "Sadia." Sadie is, of course, a diminutive of Sally or Sarah. At least two Sarahs figured in Hickok's earlier life: Sarah McLaughlin, still a child at Troy Grove when he left home in 1856 (and who remembered him vividly into old age), and Sarah Shull, the mistress of David C. McCanles at Rock Creek, Nebraska Territory in 1861. However, I did have one break. In the census there is a reference to a "Mr. James Vaughn," owner of an unnamed hotel situated close to the St. James Hotel. Among Vaughn's domestic staff was a 21-year-old girl from Canada named Salina Stubbs. No further reference to her has been found (we checked as far as the 1880s), and it would be a long stretch of the imagination to suggest that she was the mysterious Sadia. Nevertheless, since the consensus of opinion is that the poem was written by a young woman, and given the close proximity of her abode to that of Wild Bill's, it does suggest a possible connection. But conjecture is not proof, for I suspect that the answer to the riddle of Sadia may yet lie in Texas.

Therefore, we are left with a number of unanswered questions. How did the photograph and poem reach Texas? Did Sadia marry and keep Hickok's photograph and the poem secret from her husband and family, or did she never marry, yet mourned him? We may never know the answers, but Sadia's prized possession of Wild Bill's photograph and her poignant attempt at expressing her feelings for him, remained her secret for almost a century before being rescued from obscurity. Perhaps in time we will also learn more of the lady herself.



Lorenzo Hickok. Writing to his brother Horace at Troy Grove, Illinois, Lorenzo provides some insight into the origin of the tintype.

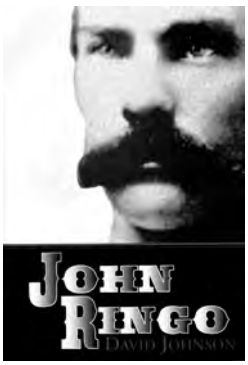
– Courtesy Bob McCubbin –

Author's Note: I should like to express my thanks to Fred Kline, the dealer who provided me with prints of the photograph and the poem and gave permission to reproduce them; and to Iris Wylie of the Springfield Public Library who discovered Salina Stubbs and provided me with a great deal of background information.

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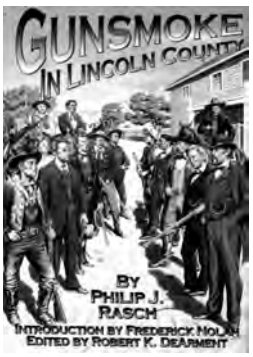
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- *Wild West:* Historical western magazine covering information from the Civil War to the turn of the 20th century. **www.historynet.com**
- *Guns of the Old West:* Features product reviews and stories about the guns that won the west and the exciting game of Cowboy Action Shooting. **www.gunsoftheoldwest.com**
- *Cowboys & Indians:* The magazine of the contemporary American West, showcasing western film, fashions, entertainment and activities. **www.cowboysindians.com**
- *Chronicle of the Old West:* Stories and information about the west in its hay-day. **www.chronicleoftheoldwest.com**
- *Cowboy Chronicle* (SASS): Shooters handbook for the Single-Action-Shooter. **www.sassnet.com**
- *American Cowboy:* Magazine about the comtemporary cowboy in life and the world today. Features on ranching, fashion, music and history. **www.americancowboy.com**
- *Range:* Devoted to the issues that threaten the West, its people, lifestyles, lands and wildlife.**www.rangemagazine.com**
- *Shoot,*: Dedicated to covering the world of Cowboy Action Shooting, from arms to competition. **www.shootmagazine.com**
- *Route 66 Magazine,* Celebrating the glories of America's main street Route 66. **www.route66magazine.com**
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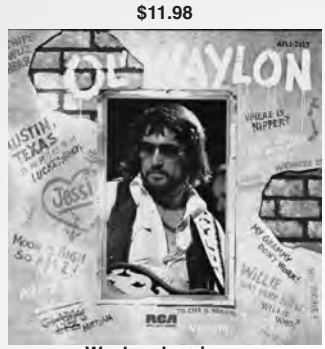
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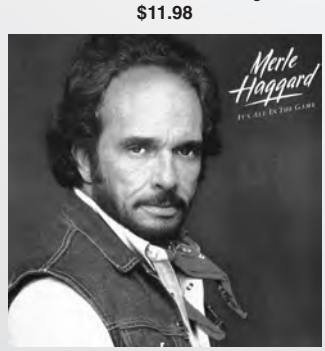
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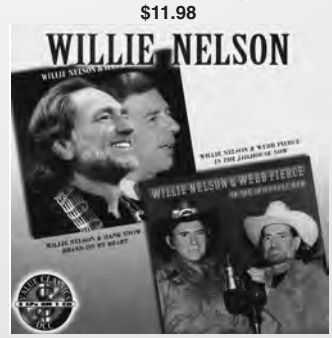
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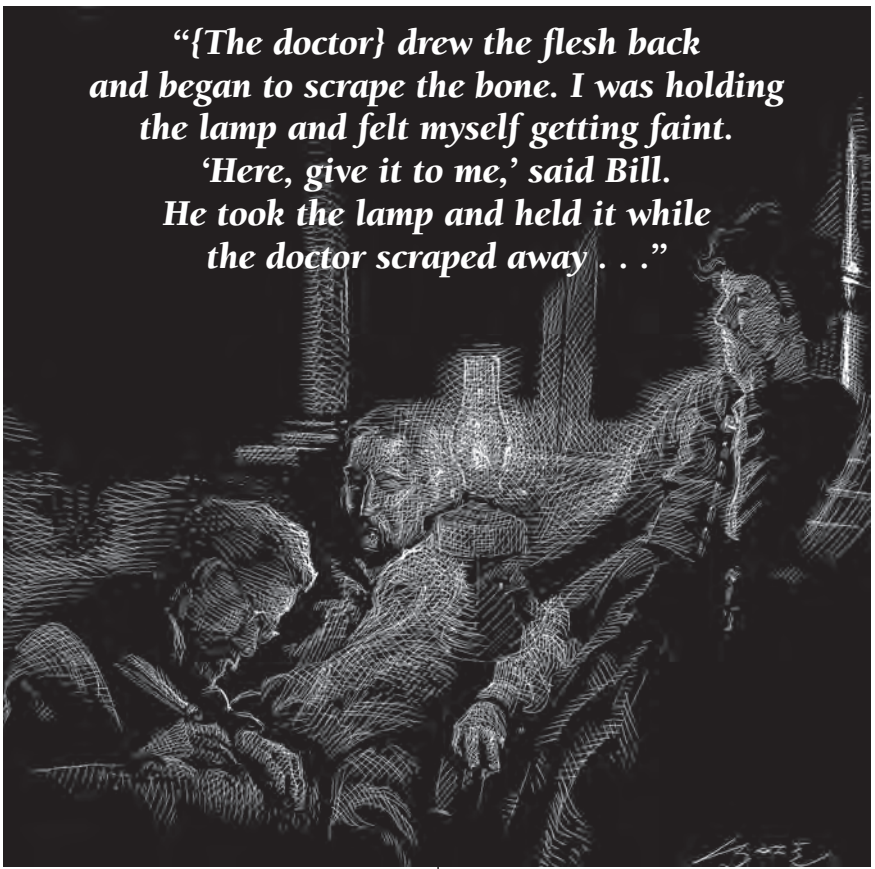
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Lance Wound

BY JOSEPH G. ROSA

Wild Bill's heroics undergo surgery



Early in February 1869, Wild Bill Hickok, while a scout and guide for the Tenth Cavalry Regiment, was reportedly wounded by a Cheyenne lance thrust into his thigh when carrying dispatches between Forts Lyon and Wallace. He managed to get himself back to Fort Lyon where he was treated. He gave the lance to his friend Buffalo Bill Cody. Hickok, once he was able, visited his family at Troy Grove, Illinois, where he again underwent surgery. By May, he had fully recovered and had returned to the Plains.

That, in essence, is the story. In an interview given in 1896, his sister Lydia gave credence to the incident by describing his wound (which became septic) and its treatment by a local doctor. The doctor that Lydia claimed tended his wound has been confirmed, and more recently, I learned that a Cheyenne lance once owned by Cody, and possibly the one he claimed Hickok gave him, is now in the collection of the Buffalo Bill Museum in Cody, Wyoming.

That should be the end of the matter—but a reference to Hickok and Cody in Leavenworth, Kansas, in the March 5, 1869, edition of the *Times and Conservative* prompted me to reopen my file. The *Times and Conservative* stated that Hickok, Cody and others had just arrived from Fort Cobb, Indian Territory. If Hickok were in Leavenworth, Kansas, only one month after being wounded, it would mean that his wound had immediately turned septic, then he traveled to Troy Grove, Illinois, where it was treated, recovered, and somehow managed to arrive in Kansas in only one month's time. Now *that* would be amazing.



Confirming his stay in Kansas, Lt. W.H. Beck, acting assistant quartermaster, who had hired Hickok "in the field" on September 1, 1868, recorded in the Fort Lyon Post Returns, March 9, a payment made to Hickok on February 28, 1869, when he received $300 backdated to December 1.

I then searched various post medical records to see if Hickok was treated for wounds. Fort Cobb did not have a hospital, and no mention of Hickok has been found in the hospital records of Fort Lyon for the early part of 1869. The question then is: was he wounded at all, or was the wound (however incurred) considered "slight" and perhaps treated in the field? This might explain the lack of mention in official records. If the latter, it would explain his sister's statement that the family only learned of it when he asked for a fresh bandage.

In the *Chicago Daily Record* of December 26, 1896, Lydia Hickok Barnes recalled how her brother sustained his wound:

The longest time he ever remained [in Troy Grove] was three weeks, and that

was when he was wounded up in Minnesota by an Indian spear. It struck him in the hip, the point bending when it struck the bone so that he had to stop and get off his horse to pull it out. He paid little attention to the wound and rode to Fort Leavenworth, where there was a letter from me to him telling him that [M]other was not well and asking him to come home. He came but said nothing of his wound for several days, although he had Dr. Thomas, of Mendota, Ill., to dress it and care for it. We learned of it only when he asked for some lint to put a fresh bandage on it. Later, it became necessary to lance the wound and scrape the bone . . .

The doctor came one evening to perform the operation, but Bill would not take chloroform. The doctor made four cuts outward from the wound making a perfect cross with the lance. Then he drew the flesh back and began to scrape the bone. I was holding the lamp and felt myself getting faint. "Here, give it to me," said Bill. He took the lamp and held it while the doctor scraped away, never flinching once during the operation.



Lydia and Celinda Hickok, sisters of Wild Bill. It was Lydia who described in the December 1896 Chicago Daily Record *how Bill held the lamp while the doctor cleaned his wound.*

- Courtesy of the Kansas State Historical Society -

Lydia's disclosure that her brother himself had approached and been treated by Dr. Thomas, suggests that during his stopover at Mendota he had sought his help. This makes sense of her reference to a second visit from the good doctor. Nevertheless, there are no known official reports of Hickok being attacked by Cheyenne warriors near Fort Lyon during February 1869.

To reach any sort of logical conclusion, we must first return to the source of the story. This story first appeared in J.W. Buel's *Heroes of the Plains* published in 1882 where he claimed that Hickok received his wound when he killed Black Kettle in March 1869. Both he and Cody were the heroes of the day, and both were "chief of scouts"—Hickok for his work with General "Primrose" [Penrose] and Cody for his work with General Eugene Carr. Either Buel deliberately fictionalized events, or simply accepted his source without question, but whatever the reason, he was hopelessly in error. Black Kettle was killed by Custer's troops at the Washita in November 1868, at which time Penrose and Carr were otherwise engaged in the vicinity of Palo Duro Creek. And by March 1869 the campaign was over. However, Buel's description of Hickok running the gauntlet of spears, tomahawks and other weapons, and being saved from certain death by Buffalo Bill, fascinated his readers. He also claimed that the point of the spear had been dipped in poison and Hickok had to be rushed to Fort Hays in an ambulance. With his wound still troubling him, Hickok decided to visit his mother's home in Illinois.

"Hickok running the gauntlet of spears, tomahawks and other weapons . . . being saved from certain death by Buffalo Bill . . ."

The Fort Hays records contain no reference to Hickok—indeed, such was his reputation that, had he been treated there, newspapers and local recollections would have mentioned the fact. Author William E. Connelley, in his version of events, reported that in March 1869, Hickok, ordered to carry dispatches from Fort Lyon to Fort Wallace, was jumped by a band of Cheyennes who attacked him: The leader of the band was mounted on a fine war-pony, and he was armed with a spear having a broad head. This warrior charged Wild Bill, who was prevented from shooting by the rearing of his horse, which he was holding by the bridle, gripped at the bit. The Indian struck at him with the spear, and Hickok did not entirely escape the plunge. The spear struck him in the right hip. It was a glancing blow, but it inflicted a deep ragged flesh wound. Wild Bill shot this Indian just as another Indian struck, missed him, and speared his rearing horse. As the horse went down Hickok shot the warrior. The other Indian, a few feet away, then attempted to ride up the steep bank and escape, but Hickok shot him also, and he rolled back into the stream.

Connelley claimed that the fight lasted two minutes and, at the end of it, seven Indians were dead and Hickok, who "still wore his own hair," was badly hurt. He managed to capture an Indian pony, and

after saddling it and gathering up lances and spears, set course for Fort Lyon where the next morning he was found by a wood detail some distance from the fort. Cody, who was at the fort, later joined Hickok on a visit to the scene of conflict and Hickok gave him the spear, which Cody still had as late as June 25, 1914.

Wilbert Eisele, who published the third version of this story, based upon Buel's with a few additions, surprisingly ignored Connelley's version of events. Instead, he claimed that when Hickok visited his mother's home he was still suffering from old wounds—and that the fight with the Indian Conquering Bear, and a shoot-out with four cowboys in Nebraska, were both figments of Buel's fevered imagination.

Then, Richard O'Connor wrote a version that tallies with Connelley's, except that he added that Hickok's "wound, inflicted by a broad-bladed spearhead, refused to respond to treatment by the army surgeon and kept suppurating." It was then that he decided to visit his mother's home.

Finally, Frank J. Wilstach, whose book has received a lot of criticism from historians, nonetheless was the first writer to query the story. First he debunked Buel's claim that Hickok killed Black Kettle—he checked General Philip Sheridan's report of the campaign, and concluded that Buel had been duped. He then added that Hickok was at Fort Leavenworth when he received a letter from his sister Lydia telling him that his mother was ill and suggesting that he come and see her. "The fact that he was suffering from a knife or spear wound (which he could not have received in [that] battle) lends credence to the story of the duel with Conquering Bear," he concluded.

The reported fight with Conquering Bear is an established part of Hickok's legend. Once more we find that it was Buel who first reported details of the encounter. Conquering Bear, he claimed, was a Sioux sub-chief under the command of General James Lane during the Civil War who turned traitor and was killed by Hickok in a classic duel—Wild Bill sustaining a number of severe knife wounds before killing the Indian. Buel wrote that the duel was fought on January 22, 1865, and that



Portrait of Sioux Chief Black Kettle, sketched from an 1864 photograph. In Heroes of the Plains *published in 1882, author J.W. Buel erred when he wrote that Wild Bill received his wound when he killed the chief in March 1869. Black Kettle had already perished at the hands of Custer's troops at the Washita in November 1868.*

- Courtesy of the Oklahoma State Historical Society -

Hickok was taken to Lawrence (by a friendly Indian), bandaged up, and then sent on to Kansas City, where Dr. Joshua Thorne (who looms large in the Hickok saga in connection with wounds and eye disorders) patched him up. "But the wound was an obstinate one, and caused him pain and annoyance for years afterward." We know that Buel's dating was wrong, for Hickok was working out of Springfield, Missouri, at the time under the orders of General John B. Sanborn, and reports of General Lane being in charge of Indians—Sioux or otherwise—must be treated with great caution.

In hindsight, and with the benefit of present-day access to materials denied to or ignored by early scriveners, many of the legends attributed to the likes of Wild Bill have been scotched or revised based upon fact. We now know that Hickok was in Leavenworth early in March 1869, which adds credence to Lydia's claim that her letter found him there, and, according to the Mendota, Illinois, *Bulletin* of March 18: "Last week Wild Bill was stopping at the Passenger House and was visited by many of our citizens. He was the center of attraction."

". . . the fight lasted two minutes and, at the end of it, seven Indians were dead."

In summary, then, tradition based upon hearsay asserts that Wild Bill was wounded by a Cheyenne lance during the latter stages of Sheridan's winter campaign of 1868-69; but, so far, no evidence of any treatment by an army surgeon has been found. It would be simple to say that Buel lied and introduced the story to enhance Hickok's heroics, and others accepted his claim without question, or decided to change the story to suit themselves. But there remains Lydia's account. She was a very outspoken lady who expressed great anger at some of the deliberate lies told about her brother. So to suggest that she, too, was lying would require more than an opinion. Indeed, Lydia's niece Ethel told me that while her uncle Jim's visit and reported wound were remembered in the family, she was unaware of any family correspondence on the subject, but she did remember her aunt Lydia's interview in the *Chicago Daily Record*—Ethel was ten years old at the time.

While I do not have any faith in Buel's version of how Hickok was wounded, or indeed the other variations, I am left with the feeling that Hickok may have sustained a wound; but not necessarily in such dramatic circumstances. The important thing is that whatever one's view of the story, it must be said that for once Wild Bill Hickok himself was not accused of inventing it!

Author's Note: I am indebted to James D. Drees for providing me with a copy of the March 5, 1869 reference to Hickok at Leavenworth, and to Michael T, Meier of the National Archives, who kindly checked Post Surgeon Returns for 1869.

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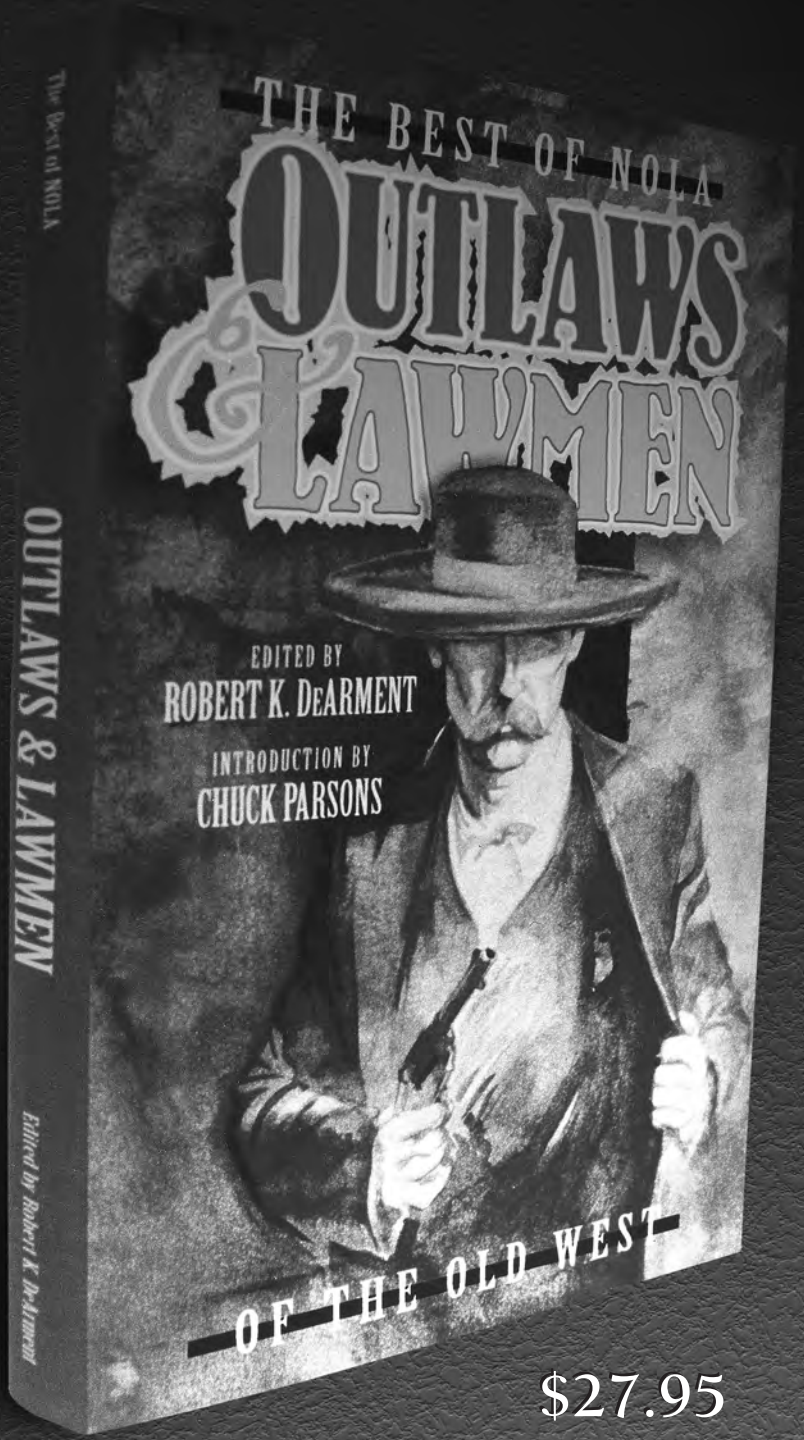
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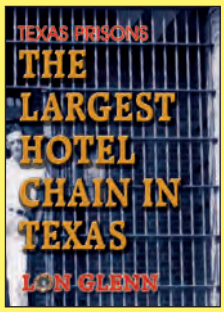
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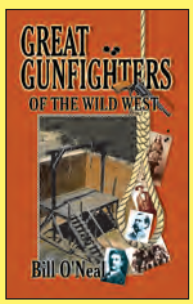
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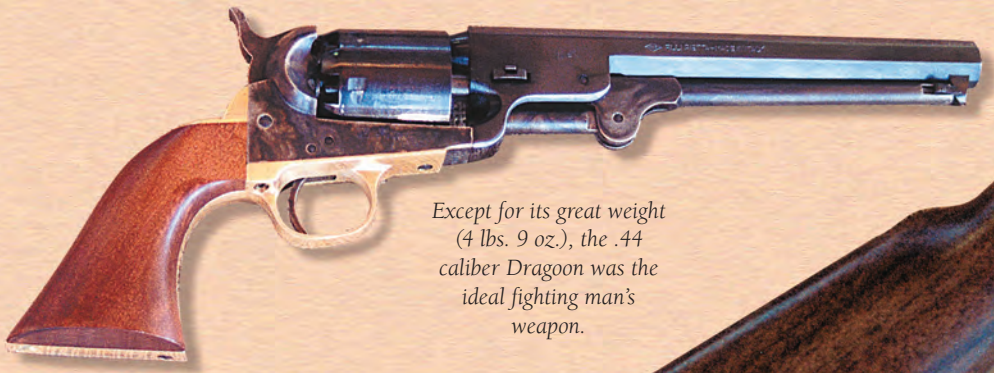
Wild Bill's Fire



According to "White Eye" Anderson, Wild Bill was carrying a pair of Colt's .38 rim or center-fire Navy conversions, a model introduced before the famous Peacemaker—a weapon that was reportedly used by Hickok, though it is doubtful that he ever got his hands on one.

Writing in the Chicago Tribune *on August 25, 1876, an unnamed admirer declared that Wild Bill's favorite weapons were "Colt's 'Navies,' and in the rapid and wonderfully accurate use of them, it is admitted he had no equal in the West. They were handsome ivory-handled articles, and were always at that time swinging to his belt."*

GUNBELT AND LEATHER
- COURTESY GARRETT ROBERTS -



Except for its great weight (4 lbs. 9 oz.), the .44 caliber Dragoon was the ideal fighting man's weapon.

Hickok was buried with a Springfield Sporter based upon the Model 1870 .50-70 rifle.

arm Favorites



Upon leaving Buffalo Bill's Combination in 1874, *Hickok was given a pair of .44 Smith & Wesson revolvers—no one seems to know what happened to them.*

A '73 caliber Winchester in a .44-40, reportedly used by Hickok.

A Model 1866 Winchester, like the one Hickok used in Hays City, 1870.

Wild Bill's Pistols and Rifles

Oldtimer Charles Gross who had known Hickok in Abilene, recalled that he once watched Wild Bill leave his cabin early one morning, fire off one pistol, clean and reload it, then repeat the performance with its mate. Gross was fascinated as he watched him carefully clean each pistol, check the state of the cylinder nipples and check the fulminate of mercury contained in each percussion cap before placing them. Hickok molded his own bullets, and made sure of their positioning before he rammed them down. Asked if his weapons had gotten damp, Hickok replied: "No, but I ain't ready to go yet and I am not taking any chances; when I draw and pull, I must be sure."

Hickok's handguns continue to interest buffs, collectors and historians. Incredibly, none of his Civil War carbines have ever turned up which could mean that someone reading this article may own one and be entirely unaware of it—a chilling thought!

- Firearms courtesy of Dave LaRue -
Legendary Guns, Inc., Phoenix, AZ

TRUE WEST EXCLUSIVE

CLASSIC GUNFIGHTS

Wild Bill Hickok vs the 7th Cavalry

HAYS IN AN UPROAR

Hickok Almost Gets An Ear Full

BAR BRAWL LEAVES TWO DEAD

BY BOB BOZE BELL

Maps & Graphics by Gus Walker

LETTERING BY BOB STEINHILBER



July 17, 1870

Deputy U.S. Marshal Wild Bill Hickok is talking to the bartender in Paddy Welch's Place (also styled as John D. Walsh's Saloon). Without warning, two Seventh Cavalry troopers suddenly attack Hickok from the rear (a newspaper claims "five soldiers attacked Bill"), pinning his arms and wrestling Hickok to the floor.

Known as a "pugilist" (a boxer) and a powerful man, Jeremiah Lonergan pins Wild Bill and does everything in his power to keep Hickok's arms out away from his body (and his pistols).

An eyewitness claims that a second soldier, John Kile, whips out a Remington pistol from underneath his blouse, "puts the muzzle into Wild Bill's ear, and snaps it." The pistol misfires.

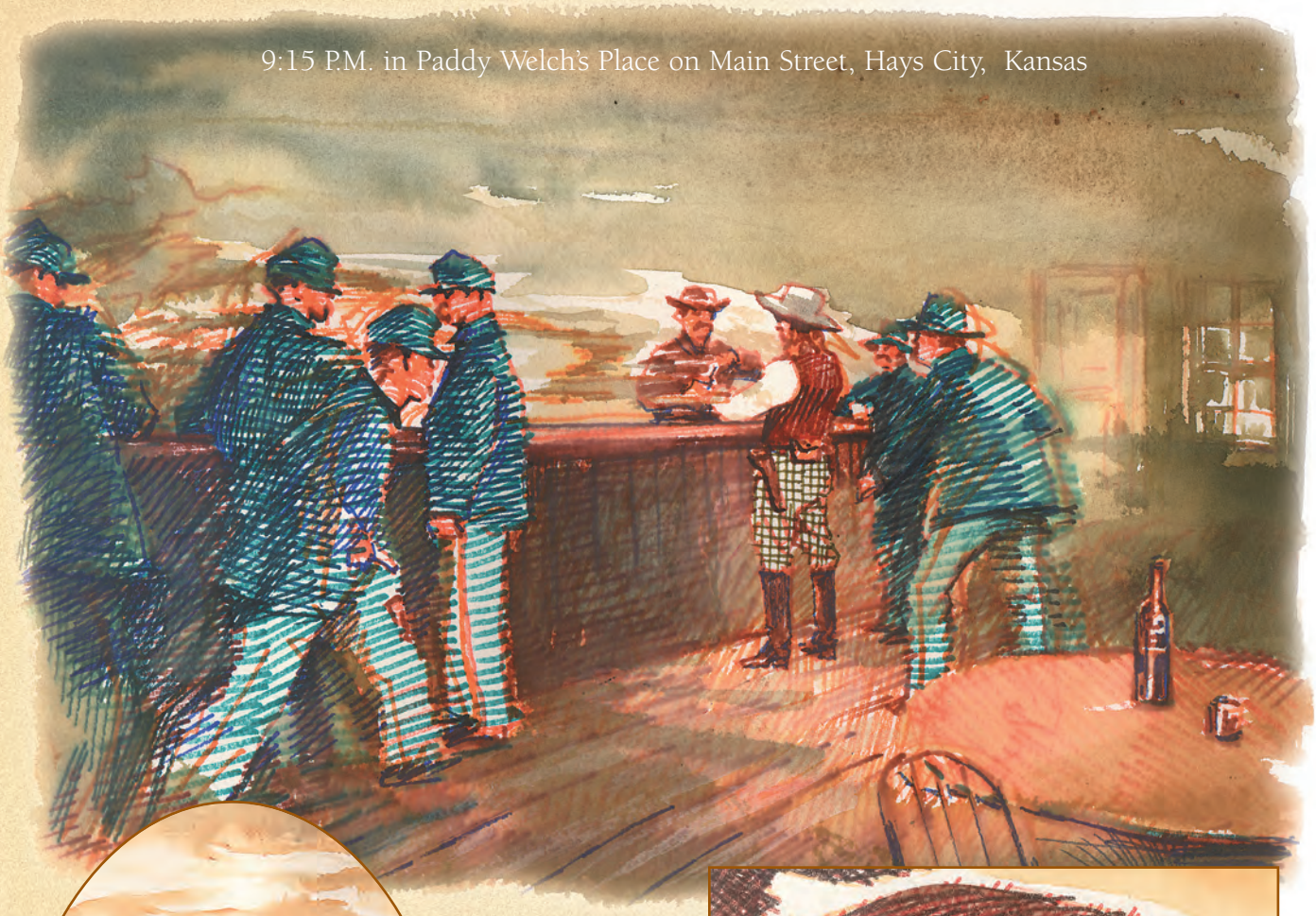
Amid the yelling and ensuing commotion, the two soldiers and Hickok grapple on the floor, each trying to get an advantage. (At some point, Wild Bill receives a wound in his leg; it is unclear whether he is shot or injured in the scuffling).

In spite of Lonergan's best efforts, Hickok manages to unholster one pistol and fires off a round, hitting Kile in the wrist. A second round hits Kile in the side and he rolls away in agony.

Desperate now, Lonergan fights for his life, trying to keep Wild Bill's pistol barrel out of range. He is not successful. Pushing against the



9:15 P.M. in Paddy Welch's Place on Main Street, Hays City, Kansas









While Jeremiah Lonergan slips up behind Wild Bill Hickok at the bar, John Kile (above and at right) pulls a Remington pistol out from under his coat and gets ready to pounce.

much larger man, Bill fights with all his might, until he can get his pistol turned far enough to fire. The resulting shot hits Lonergan in the knee cap.

Stunned, Longergan gives up his grip and quickly joins Kile on the disabled list. Hickok wastes no time as he scrambles to his feet and "makes tracks for the back of the saloon," jumping "through a window, taking the glass and sash with him," and makes good his escape.

When news of the gunfight reaches the fort, a number of troopers seize their guns and make for Hays City, searching all the "saloons and dives" but they can't find Wild Bill.

Odds & Ends

After his escape, Wild Bill went back to his room, grabbed a Winchester rifle and 100 rounds of ammunition, and hid out in the Boothill cemetery west of town, waiting for an attack that never came. In the morning, he high-tailed it to Big Creek station and boarded a train out of the area.

●

Kile lived until July 18 when he died from wounds received "as a result of a drunken row." Ironically, Kile had previously received the Medal of Honor for his actions in protecting his fellow soldiers in an Indian skirmish the year before. Lonergan recovered from his wound but was later killed by another soldier, in yet another brawl.

●

As the months turned into years, the legend of the gunfight expanded with each retelling, and the tally of soldiers fighting Hickok grew. James Buel's mammoth tome *Heroes of the Plains*, 1881, has Wild Bill fighting 15 soldiers (see illustration below), and wounded 7 times while dispatching 3 troopers.



●

We recommend: *Wild Bill Hickok: Gunfighter*, by Joseph G. Rosa, Creative Publishing, College Station, Texas. (800) 245- 5841.







Wild Bill clears leather and fires, hitting Kile in the wrist. A second shot hits the reeling Kile in the side and he spins away.

After dispatching Kile with two shots, Hickok turns his attention to Lonergan, and is able to get the barrel of his Navy trained on his antagonist's knee (above, left). The resulting shot forces Lonergan to give up his grip. Training both pistols on the remaining soldiers, Hickok covers his retreat, jumping through the rear window to safety.

Kile reels on the floor of the dirty saloon with a mortal wound. Had his pistol worked, he would be forever known as the man who killed Wild Bill. Instead, his life is over, and another tough in another barroom, also with a misfiring pistol, will garner the dubious "honor" of dispatching Wild Bill.







Thadd Turner



Jerry Terantino



Doc Ingalls

Wild Bill Nation

At different times in the past five years Jerry Terantino, Jerry Crandall (not pictured), Doc Ingalls and Thadd Turner have graciously modeled for me (read that "for free") as the Prince of the Pistoleers. All have contributed authentic costumes, weaponry and elements of that distinct Wild Bill persona. Thank you gents.

The Boys of Obsession

A behind-the-scenes look at the making of Classic Gunfights

Model Behavior

(L to R) Michael Woodcock, Scott Dunkirk, Robert Hunter, Garrett Roberts, Chris T. DeMille (yes, he's related to that DeMille), Ernest Cummings and Thadd Turner



Like the Boy Scouts of old, Old West reenactors have a tendency to be kind, courteous, helpful and generous. Co-editor and Wild Bill look-alike, Thadd Turner, joined me on a rainy Saturday, May 19, as we took the short jaunt up to Camp Verde, AZ for Military Days. I wanted to shoot reference photos for this month's "Classic Gunfights" (opposite page).

As we arrived, my contact, Garrett Roberts, immediately got the gist of what I was striving for and yelled out across the parade ground that we needed four or five post-Civil War soldiers for a photo shoot. "What year?" an approaching private wanted to know. "That blouse won't do," Garrett barked, "this is 1870, go get the right one." As the soldier trotted off to get authenticized, more questions and observations came from the recruits: "Is this summer or winter?" Summer, I told them. "No officer would have been present in this bar," I was told matter-of-factly (evidently the officers only drank on the post). Attention to detail was the order of the day: "that stripe is too big on his leg, you'll need to bring it in at least an eighth of an inch in your drawings." No problem, I told them.



By the time we were ready to shoot, Garrett had them all whipped into shape, except one. When we went onto a back porch of one of the fort buildings, we encountered a sleeping Rough Rider (1890s, see photo). When we woke him up, I decided to use him as an extra body in the background, just for atomosphere. Garrett gave me a dirty look (he had on leggings , the wrong scarf and the wrong style hat for this shoot!). I assured him I would draw around the innacuracies.

Some believe that shooting an event and then using slides to create drawings is cheating. Well, I say it's accurate cheating. I wouldn't have been able to have story-boarded the Seventh Cavalry shoot-out with Wild Bill as accurately as I have without the help of the Boys at Camp Verde and their obsession with detail. Thanks.

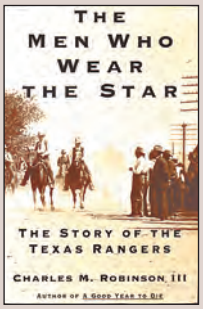
And speaking of obsession to detail, we're going to be doing an in-depth piece on all of you who simply have to get it right—right down to the stitching on the back of your gunbelts. As Garrett Roberts put it as he proudly showed me the back of one of his gunbelts: "See that? No zig zag stitching." When I asked him what the significance was, he said "zig-zag stitching says sewing machine." "But Garrett," I asked rather incredulously, "it's on the inside of the gunbelt. No one can see it." Garrett shook his head, disappointed in my tiny mind: "I know it's there and it's right." Now that's *obsessive!*

If you know of anyone who is this anal about Old West details we want their story. Drop us a line at editor@truewestmagazine.com. Or, write us at: Boys & Girls of Obsession, PO Box 8008, Cave Creek, AZ 85327.

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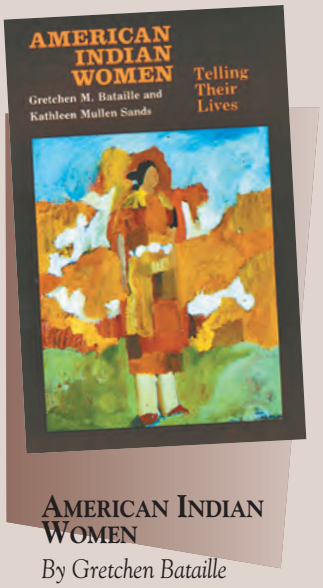


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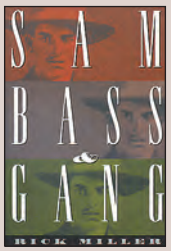


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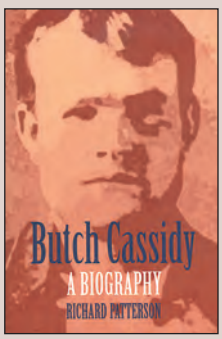


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AN EXCERPT FROM THE NEW BOOK, *WILD BILL HICKOK: DEADWOOD CITY—END OF TRAIL.*

BY THADD TURNER

The Shooting Of Wild Bill

At about 12:00 noon, Wednesday, August 2, 1876, James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok, dressed in a favorite frock coat, expensive linen shirt and fine dress pants, entered Lewis, Nuttall and Mann's No. 10 Saloon in Deadwood City, Dakota Territory, seeking entertainment and drink.

There were about a half-dozen people in the No. 10 gaming hall and saloon, including Carl Mann, the co-owner; Captain William R. Massie, a former Missouri river boat captain, and at that time, local real estate broker and speculator; and Charlie Henry Rich, a young part-time gambler and card dealer whom Bill had met earlier in the year in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The three men were engaged in a game of draw poker and quickly invited Wild Bill to join them at the table.

"Colorado" Charlie Utter and Moses E. "California Joe" Milner were not with Wild Bill on this occasion. On this very same day, Charlie Utter was engaged in a race between Fort Laramie, Wyoming, and Deadwood City with his recently formed Pioneer Pony Express Service. California Joe was busy scouting and patrolling the surrounding hills looking for Sioux. An experienced frontiersman and Indian fighter, California Joe was a favorite among the local mining camps as the man to protect them from the many bands of marauding Sioux now aggressively harassing the white trespassers. Deadwood and Whitewood Gulches were in a constant state of panic over possible Indian attacks. The camps were heavily armed and expecting trouble.



Wild Bill Hickok

– Courtesy Robert G. McCubbin –

The No. 10 Saloon was laid out in typical frontier fashion—when entering the establishment, the bar occupied the wall to the right, and took up about 8 feet of floor space, then ran about 20-25 feet along the east wall. Tables were placed throughout the center. Most chairs were simple stools, as these were easier to stack and transport on wagons. The table that Wild Bill joined was in the middle of the floor toward the rear of the building.

When Hickok entered the game, the only available empty seat was near the rear entrance of the saloon and faced the front door. The stool sat between the card table and the open bar. At this end of the bar a weight scale was used to weigh out gold dust brought in by miners, as it was popular at this time to pay for goods directly with gold—monetary exchange was not common until later in the year.

A seat between the card table and the west wall was occupied by Charlie Rich. It afforded him a completely unobstructed view of the entire room, including a good view of the front and rear doors. More importantly, the wall behind the chair, allowed his back to be "covered." Wild Bill had played cards at this table frequently, and this was his customary seat.

Hickok asked Charlie Rich for his"regular" seat, but was rebuffed by the young gambler, who apparently was

DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSASSIN

Jack McCall



ARTIST'S GUESS #1 ARTIST'S GUESS #2

Jack McCall

Alias:	Bill Sutherland
Age:	Believed to be about twenty-five years of age.
Home:	Jefferson Town, Kentucky or New Orleans
Description:	"His head which is covered by a thick crop of chestnut hair, is very narrow...a small sandy mustache covers a sensual mouth. The nose is what is commonly called 'snub'. Cross-eyes and a florid complexion."Also noted: "a course double chin is partially hidden by a stiff goatee."
Clothing:	Clad in a blue flannel shirt, brown overalls and heavy shoes (at his trial).



Jack McCall was a miner (see at near left) and this helped him at his first trial when the miner's of the camp sided with McCall against Hickok and the "gambling element."

winning at this location—draw poker is largely a game of chance and luck, and Rich didn't want to move. Wild Bill stated that he was uncomfortable with his back exposed to the open bar and rear door, and again asked Rich to trade seat locations. This time he was chided by the other two players at the table, who felt that he had nothing to worry about. After all, it was early in the day, just after dinner (lunch), and most activity in town was on the street or at the mines.

Charlie Rich was a young man of only 20 years when he refused to give up his chair to Wild Bill Hickok. It is very probable that if Bill had persisted, the youthful Rich would have recanted—after all, it would do the greenhorn no good to incur the wrath of a famous gun fighter. However, Hickok was apparently comfortable enough and dropped the debate. He just wanted to relax and play cards, and evidently, felt no immediate threat from the rear of the saloon.

Wild Bill took the empty seat. He had a clear and unobstructed view of the front door straight in front of him, and of the bar to his front and left; he could comfortably turn his head to see the building's rear door. His back, however, was exposed to a small open area of the room between the end of the bar and the rear door, which was about 10 feet behind his chair. The rear door may have been located just left of center on the back wall behind Bill.

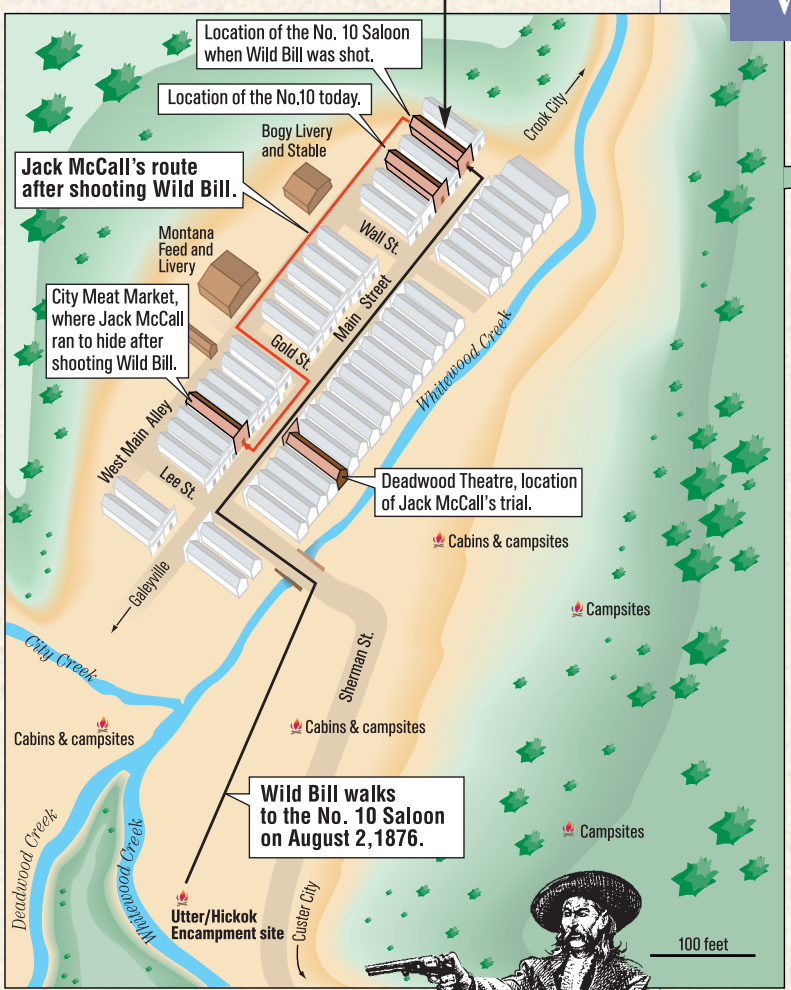
Seated directly across from Wild Bill was Captain Massie. Seated to Hickok's immediate left was Carl Mann, who had his back directly exposed to the front door and the open bar area. Charlie Rich was to Bill's right. The men played cards.

It's possible that Wild Bill had been in a poker game at this same table location just the night before with three other gamblers, including a young miner by the name of Jack McCall, at the time known by the alias Bill Sutherland. At some point in the evening, one of the cash pots built up to a point where Hickok made a large one-time bet. McCall matched this heavy bet by shoving a small gold dust sack, or purse, onto the table to play the hand. Wild Bill won the hand, and the game subsequently ended as McCall had no additional funds to play. When the purse was taken over to the gold dust scales and weighed out, the sack was short about $16 to $18.

Death in the Dakotas at The No. 10 Saloon

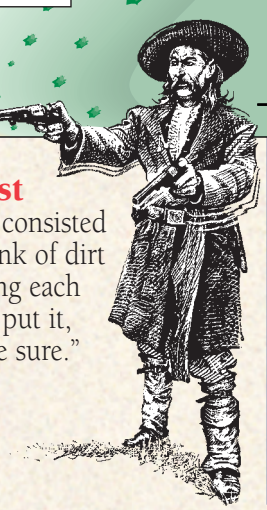


The No. 10 Saloon is one of the most famous sites in all of the West. Due to multiple fires and the fluid nature of the embryonic town, the exact spot is very hard to pinpoint. At left is the street as it looks today. The exact spot of the No. 10 can be seen in the photo at left, just to the right of the center building (also see map below).



12 Shots Before Breakfast

Wild Bill's daily morning ritual consisted of firing off both pistols into a bank of dirt behind his camp and then cleaning each weapon thoroughly. As he earlier put it, "When I draw and pull, I must be sure."



Wild Bill's West • 1837-1876



Source: *The West of Wild Bill Hickok* by Joseph Rosa



Positioned as they were moments before Wild Bill held his famous Dead Man's Hand, these model 1876 gamblers inside the No. 10 Saloon today help visitors envision the No. 10 Saloon—just the way it was.

- PHOTO BY JOHN BING -





This, of course, was not acceptable, and so the young miner went to his camp site, returning shortly with more gold dust to make up the difference. It was apparent that the inexperienced gambler was broke after squaring up with Hickok, and Wild Bill asked him as much. When McCall confirmed that he was indeed busted, Hickok offered his loose change to the penniless miner to buy himself some



Typical scale for weighing gold dust. Many saloons and merchants had these scales on site to accomodate the purchases and gambling demands of the many miners who paid directly for their goods.

- Courtesy Thadd Turner -

supper, which the miner declined to take.

At about 3:00 p.m. on this fateful day, Jack McCall (Bill Sutherland) walked through the front door of the No. 10 Saloon. Immediately recognized by Wild Bill, who apparently perceived no threat, he turned his attention back to the game in play. The real name of this 25-year-old would soon be discovered. The four men at the table in the rear of the gaming hall had been engaged in playing draw poker for almost three hours.

McCall at this exact moment left the gold dust scales and started toward the rear door, stepping into Wild Bill's blind spot

Charlie Rich had just dealt the players a new hand of cards, and Captain Massie was betting aggressively against Wild Bill. Paying attention to Massie's betting action, Wild Bill may also have been cautiously observing the general movements of the young man who had just entered the saloon. George Shingle, a No. 10 employee, was weighing gold dust on the scales at the end of the bar located near the poker table. After handing Hickok some chips for house credit, Harry Young was now standing to Shingle's immediate left; he had just returned to tending bar

Jack McCall first walked over to the upper end of the bar—a good place to allow his eyes to adjust to the darkness of the saloon—then promptly moved down it's entire length, as if to go to the gold dust scales at the end, or exit out the rear door to the West Main alley. As McCall approached the back of the building, Wild Bill may have subconsciously been following him down the entire bar length to the gold dust scales.

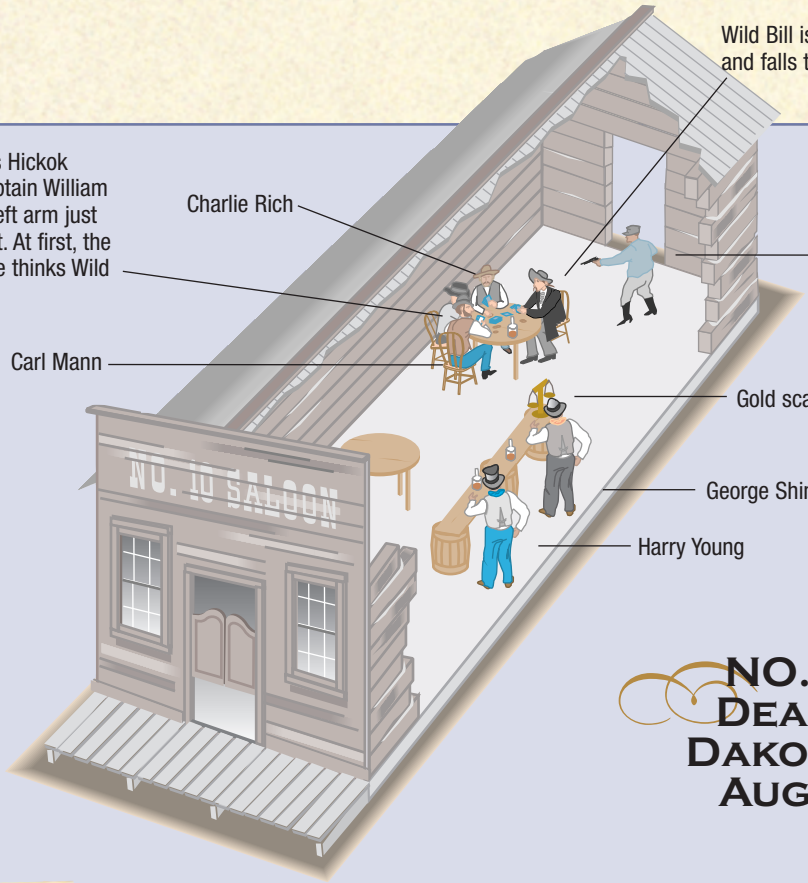
When McCall got to the scales he hesitated for a moment, and Wild Bill, possibly assuming that McCall was going to weigh out some gold dust to play cards, turned his complete attention to Captain Massie, who was just then showing his hand on the table. McCall at this exact moment left the gold dust scales and started toward the rear door, stepping into Wild Bill's blind spot.

Wild Bill was at that moment throwing his own hand onto the table in apparent disgust, as he had just lost the poker hand in play to Massie. He was heard to remark, "The old duffer, he broke me on that hand," when suddenly, less than six feet from the rear door, McCall abruptly turned and stepped forward standing within 2 to 3 feet behind Wild Bill, and pulled a single-action pistol from inside his loose fitting clothing. Raising the pistol to a point directly behind Wild Bill's head, pulled the trigger. The bullet exited out his right cheek near the bottom of his nose, taking some brain tissue with it, and knocking loose a couple of upper teeth. He did not say a word; his head moved slightly forward and he was still for a moment. Then, Wild Bill fell sideways (sosme say backwards), off his stool to the saloon floor. Death was instantaneous.

Captain Massie felt a sharp and intense pain is his left arm just above the wrist, which had been resting on the card table. The sound of the pistol shot fired, magnified inside four walls, was deafening and his ears were ringing. Confused, his first immediate thought was that Wild Bill had become enraged at losing the poker hand, and that Bill had shot him. As the former river boat captain began to regain his senses, he realized that McCall was standing there with a gun threatening the players and others in the building. The ball (bullet) that had killed Wild Bill struck Captain Massie in the left arm just above his wrist. Backing toward the rear door, McCall was screaming at the card players and the others in the rear of the building, "Come on ye sons a-bitches," as he began to cock the hammer and pull the trigger again. The pistol failed to fire.

Leveling the gun at George Shingle, who had now moved from behind the bar and was attempting to help Wild Bill, McCall attempted to shoot him, but again the gun misfired. Wild Bill was laying unmoving on the saloon floor. At this point everyone—with the exception of Carl Mann—ran out the front door of the saloon building, including Massie, Rich, Shingle and Harry Young.

McCall then leveled the gun at Carl Mann, who had remained to help Wild Bill. The killer waved the gun around threatening Mann, and again tried to fire the weapon, but it would not discharge,



NO. 10 SALOON
DEADWOOD CITY
DAKOTA TERRITORY
AUGUST 2, 1876
3 P.M.



Legendary Deadman's Hand

FIVE MYTHS OF THE SHOOTING

Myth: Wild Bill sat with his back to the front door.
Fact: Hickok could easily see the front door.
Myth: When he was shot, Wild Bill fell forward.
Fact: He fell sideways (some say backwards).
Myth: His card hand spilled onto the table.
Fact: As he hit the floor, the cards fell from his hand.
Myth: The hand Hickok was holding was Aces & Eights.
Fact: No one really knows what hand he held (cards were everywhere).
Myth: When Wild Bill was shot, his reaction was so quick he drew both six-shooters.
Fact: His only movement was a slight jerk of the head.

only "snapping" as the hammer came down on either faulty primers, moist gun powder, defective cartridges, or simply unloaded cylinder chambers. Mann attempted to find a weapon to defend himself, but by then McCall had finally left the building. Carl Mann then exited the saloon through the front door onto Main Street, where a crowd was already gathering.

Why Jack McCall shot Wild Bill Hickok has never been fully explained. At his Deadwood City trial held in the new Deadwood Theatre building, August 3 (the next day), McCall used only one defense on the advice of his appointed defense attorney, Judge Joseph Miller: He claimed that Wild Bill had shot and killed his brother in Kansas two years earlier, so his was a "revenge" motivated killing. The jury of miners—all of whom were trespassing on a Federal Indian Reservation, and thus were holding an illegal miners court with no civilian authority—bought into this defense and found McCall "not guilty" of the the killing of Hickok. McCall was set free, but left Deadwood in haste in fear of the very real possibility that California Joe and Colorado Charlie would avenge Hickok's murder.

Jack McCall was followed to Laramie City, Wyoming, by Colonel George May, the elected prosecuting attorney at the Deadwood trial. Colonel May was incensed that justice had not been served. McCall, in an attempt to gain some type of notoriety, was bragging in a local saloon about how he had gotten away with the murder of Wild Bill Hickok. Colonel May was able to obtain a federal arrest warrant against McCall, who was taken into custody on August 29, 1876, by federal authorities in Wyoming Territory.

McCall was eventually tried in federal court for the murder of Hickok in December of 1876 in Yankton, the Dakota Territorial Capitol, where he admitted that he'd lied at the Deadwood trial about Wild Bill killing his brother. He testified that he only knew Hickok from the few times he saw him in Deadwood City. McCall was found guilty as charged for the crime of murder, and was subsequently hanged March 1, 1877 in Yankton—the first legal hanging in Dakota Territory for a crime committed in the Black Hills. Jack McCall was buried with the hangman's noose around his neck in an unmarked grave in the local Catholic Cemetery.

Additional recommended reading includes Joseph G. Rosa's, *They Called Him Wild Bill—The Life and Times of James Butler Hickok*, and *Jack McCall, Assassin: An Updated Account of His Yankton Trial, Plea for Clemency, and Execution.*

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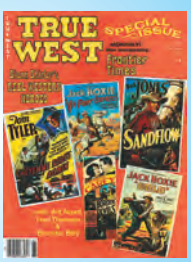
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A Deadly Game

The First Meeting of Jack McCall and Wild Bill Hickok

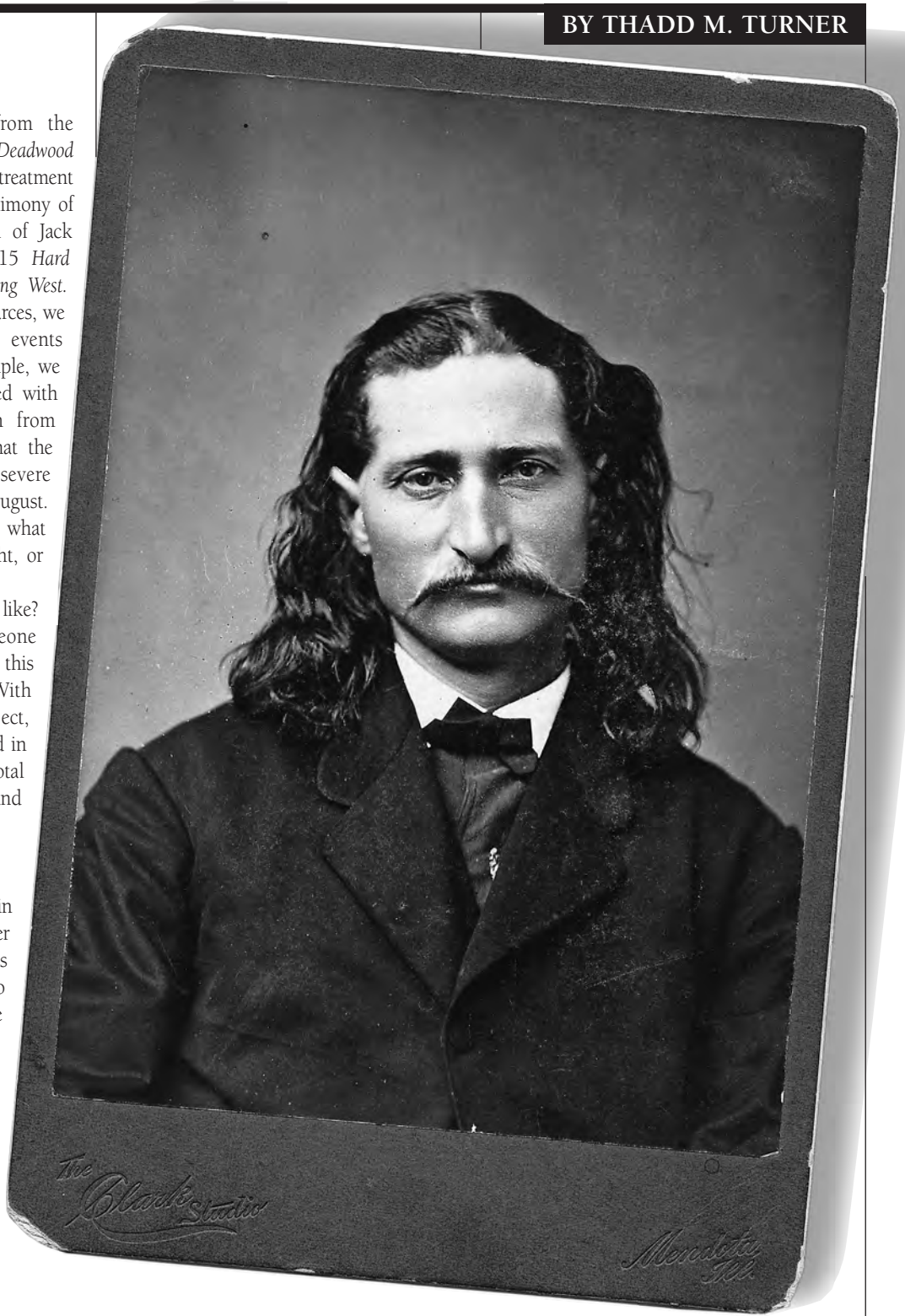
BY THADD M. TURNER

WARNING: This excerpt from the recently released *Wild Bill Hickok: Deadwood City—End of Trail* uses a fictional treatment of the facts derived from the testimony of Carl Mann at the Yankton trial of Jack McCall, and Harry Young's 1915 *Hard Knocks—Life Story of the Vanishing West.* From this and other verifiable sources, we know the nature of the events surrounding this story. For example, we know that Calamity Jane traveled with Wild Bill on the wagon train from Cheyenne to Deadwood; and that the *Black Hills Pioneer* reported severe weather for that first week in August. What we will never know, is what conversation took place that night, or what Wild Bill was thinking.

What was Wild Bill's last night like? What would motivate someone without justifiable cause to kill this legendary American hero? With extensive knowledge of his subject, the author has imaginatively filled in the blanks, recreating the pivotal moment in the lives of both hero and villain.—*True West*.

♠

It was a cold and windy night in Deadwood City—unusual weather for the first day of August. But this centennial year (1876) had also been an unusual year on the Northern Plains. George Custer and his immediate command, men of the Seventh Cavalry, had all been butchered along the Little Big Horn River just a short six weeks earlier. The Sioux and Northern Cheyenne were all at war with the United States military. It was not safe to travel into the Black Hills—the local Indians were furious that the white man was trespassing on their sacred *Paha Sapa* (lands), looking for the precious yellow rock. The Black Hills were still part of the Sioux Reservation, as granted



An absolutely haunting image of Wild Bill, this photograph hung in the home of Hickok's sister Lydia for many years. Believed to have been taken in the early 1870s, the photo shows Wild Bill looking wistful and quite cognizant of his own mortality.

- Courtesy Craig Fouts Collection -


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by the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty—and the Sioux wanted the white man off their land.

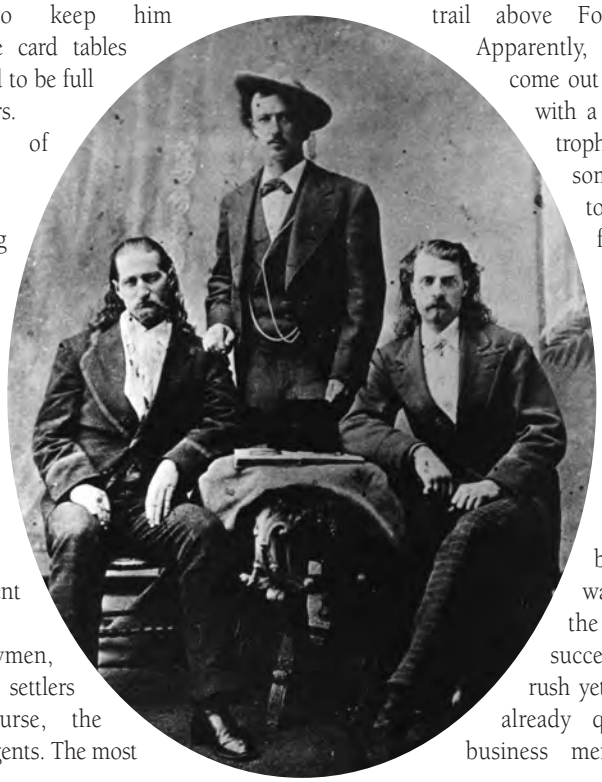
James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok had arrived only a few weeks before with his good friend "Colorado Charlie" Utter. They had left Cheyenne, Wyoming, in the latter part of June with a large wagon train, driving north to Fort Laramie, where the renowned, bullwackeress, "Calamity Jane" Cannary had asked to join them for no other reason than that she had recently worn out her welcome back in Cheyenne, and the mining boom in the Hills seemed like a good chance to get square again. Wild Bill had been thinking similar thoughts. The boom in Deadwood City just might be his chance to hook up with some mining speculators, freighting contractors, or even help Charlie run his new pony express mail service. There would also be a need for civilian law enforcement and authority, and he had plenty of experience in this profession from his days down in Kansas, working those tough cowtowns during the early cattle drives. Controlling a bunch of gold crazy miners would be easy business for a man who had spent so many dark nights facing armed, drunken and fearless Texas cowboys. This new gold boom could indeed be a great opportunity.

Wild Bill liked this little gaming and drinking place called the No. 10 Saloon. Located on the lower end of Deadwood City's rapidly growing Main Street, this simple rough-sawed wood structure had easy access from Charlie Utter's camp across Whitewood Creek, and offered a fella the chance to avoid unwanted exposure on the heaviest part of the bustling street. Everyone in town knew he was here; his reputation had preceded his arrival. Wild Bill could hold his own when it came to trouble, and he had been forced into many life-and-death situations by circumstances beyond his control, but those damn dime novel publications back East were turning him into some type of immortal—an image even he knew he could not compete with. Now he had to be aware of his complete surroundings at all times. It had become a tiring and endless job in its own right.

There were actually two gulches in Dakota Territory that consisted of about a half-dozen little mining camps all clustered on top of each other, and the busiest of them all was Deadwood City—located right between Deadwood and Whitewood Creeks. Wild Bill could see the potential here, and he just knew that he would somehow make his mark in this place. He would find it here somewhere, in some way. In the meantime, there was plenty of gambling to keep him occupied—the card tables always seemed to be full of eager players.

Most of Deadwood's prospectors were anything but miners—former Confederate and Union soldiers, cavalry scouts, freighters, ranchers, common laborers, recent immigrants, cowboys, lawmen, soiled doves, settlers and, of course, the outlaw road agents. The most experienced ones had followed the rushes to the Montana gold fields a decade earlier;.Bannick, Alder Gulch, Anaconda, and Helena had all run their course as mining camps and were established now. Interestingly, the new Black Hills gold rush was located right in the middle of the frontier, and yet no one had noticed the darn place before.

Even Wild Bill, who had scouted for the U. S. Cavalry through this region with his old pards, "Texas Jack" Omohundro and "Buffalo Bill" Cody, had never caught windof it. The Black Hills were always just considered another obstacle in the way to somewhere else. His two old scouting friends had been busy playing to the dandies and their sweethearts back East on the theater stages. However, Bill had heard that Cody was now out West again scouting for the Fifth Cavalry, and had recently gotten himself in an Indian fight down near Warbonnet Creek, a little crossing just south of the Black Hills on the wagon trail above Fort Laramie. Apparently, Cody had come out of that scrap with a small Indian trophy—something else to entertain the folks back East. To Wild Bill, there seemed to be something almost too easy about this mining boom, as if it was sure to be the most successful gold rush yet. There were already quite a few business men in town



The Combination: Wild Bill Hickok (at left), with Buffalo Bill Cody (right) and Texas Jack Omohundro, probably taken during their Wild West show tour.

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Two views of Deadwood, the top one showing Main Sreet in early 1878. The booming town is socked in with new buildings since Wild Bill's tenure. The two tall pine trees that graced the main drag in previous photos are gone. The bottom shows the general location of the No. 10 Saloon in 1877 (it was next to the gun shop in photo).

- South Dakota State Historical Society -

-Photo at left, Courtesy of Jeannine Guern Collection -

looking to make some quick money.

This was a pretty slow night in the No. 10 Saloon. Bill had his customary seat next to the west wall which offered him a complete view of the saloon floor, and allowed him to keep his back covered. Carl Mann, one of the owners of the No. 10, sat in to play cards earlier in the evening, just to keep a game going.

The two other men playing at the table were new faces to Wild Bill. The tallest one had just completed his enlistment with the Third Cavalry out of Fort McPherson, Nebraska, and barely spoke English. The ex-cavalry soldier was from one of those old countries on the European continent, and smelled of black powder and pickled eggs. The other player at the table was a young man who looked to be in his early 20s and had an awkward way about him that made Bill cautious, but more curious than alarmed.

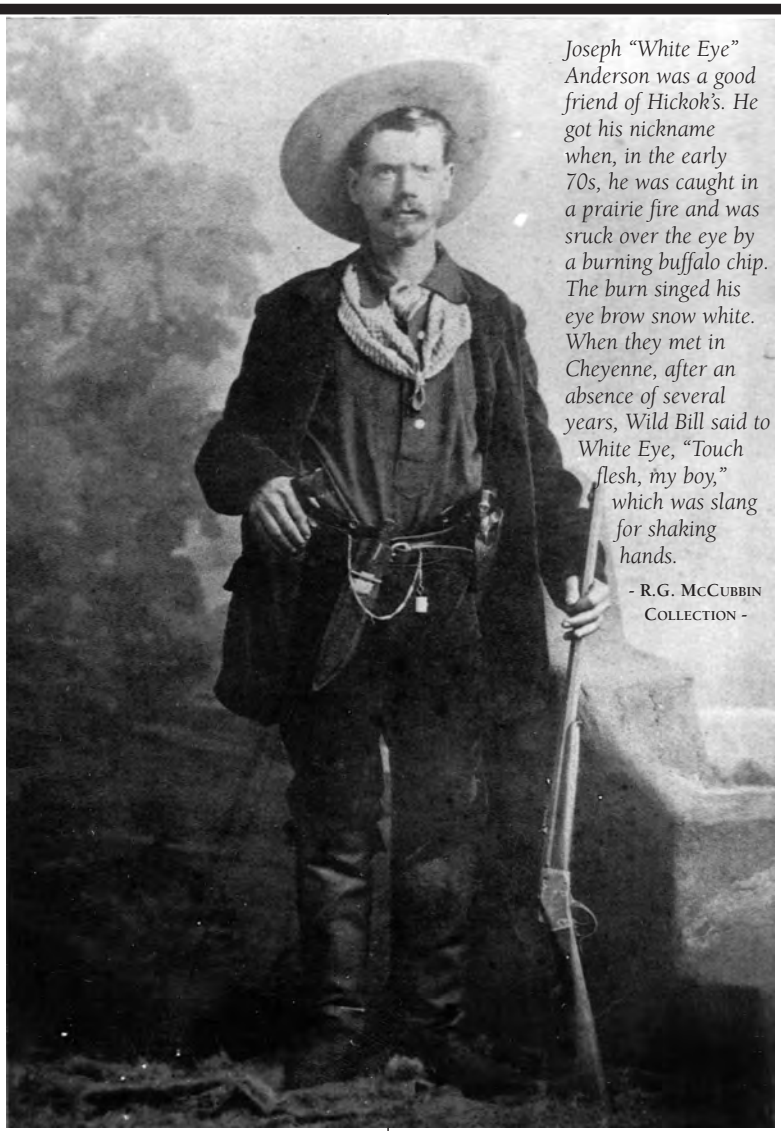
Bill Sutherland was his name, he said, though it probably wasn't. He seemed to be running from something, maybe not the law, but from something he was afraid of facing—perhaps a bad family, or a rotten marriage, or some other type of situation he

didn't really want to be any part of. There were so many terrible stories anymore—the Great War had left so many people desperate and destitute, and then there were the pioneer—Indian conflicts during the great migration West. It was a tough time just to be alive for some folks.

This young Sutherland fellow was not a good card player. He had no idea how to bluff a good hand, let alone a bad one. His eyes always started jumping around, darting from side to side like little fireflies whenever he was dealt a good hand. The sweat that formed on his thin, brown mustache, paired with a rough goatee that covered a sallow face was almost humorous. You could read this kid like a book. Bill would have almost felt guilty taking his money, except he himself was so hard up for steady cash, that he had to remind himself that he was overextended with most of the saloons around town. Charlie Utter, and Hickok's other old partner, "California Joe" Milner, whom he had run into the first day he arrived, were probably both tired of loaning him cash. They were good friends and would never question his honesty, but he knew that he was pushing his weight around farther than he ought to with both of them. He could not bring himself to write to his beloved wife Agnes for some expense money; after all, he was supposed to be making *their* fortune here in the Hills.

Wild Bill kept looking for Sutherland to give away his hand, and then he would calmly and deliberately bluff the young man into folding after building up the pot. Carl Mann knew what was going on, but that's what gambling was about. A simple game of chance—you either win or lose, but you only play what you can afford to part ways with. Besides, these young men would probably leave the mining camps soon anyway. There was only so much gold to be found, and the odds were heavily against them finding it. The real money was in the business operations. They always paid off in the gold rush camps.

If Bill Sutherland was annoyed that Wild Bill was beating him, he sure didn't show it. In fact, he just kept playing no matter how obvious it was that he didn't have a chance against the older and more experienced gambler. Hickok was 39 years of age and had probably started gambling before this kid was out of cloth wraps. Why was this young man still at this table? Apparently, he felt that he had to show the "great" Wild Bill that he wasn't afraid of him, even if it meant going broke to do it. Bill didn't care. Bring 'em all in, line 'em up, and sit 'em down. He needed the easy cash.



Joseph "White Eye" Anderson was a good friend of Hickok's. He got his nickname when, in the early 70s, he was caught in a prairie fire and was sruck over the eye by a burning buffalo chip. The burn singed his eye brow snow white. When they met in Cheyenne, after an absence of several years, Wild Bill said to White Eye, "Touch flesh, my boy," which was slang for shaking hands.

- R.G. McCubbin Collection -

Finally, the young gambler ran out of money. The ex-cavalry soldier quit about 30 minutes earlier, and Carl Mann had only stayed in the game to keep Wild Bill in the saloon. He was good for business. Sutherland had thrown his purse full of gold dust into the final pot, but when the bartender weighed it out, the sack was short about $16 dollars. The young miner said he would make it right with gold dust he had at his camp tent, so he left for a few minutes then returned with some more dust which, when weighed out, was just enough to clear the debt against Wild Bill. Hickok could tell the young fellow was completely out of cash after paying him off, and asked Sutherland, "you spent it all on cards?" "Yes," was the reply from the inexperienced gambler. "Well then, here's a dollar for your supper, pard," was Bill's response, "and don't spend it at the tables," he followed up.

Sutherland declined the generous gift and shuffled out the front door. "Well, we probably won't see him for a while," Hickok muttered to no one in particular as he headed out the front door onto Deadwood City's busy Main Street. He was an open target on this street, and he had to remain conscious of danger—not like when he was sittingin the safety of the west wall in the No. 10 Saloon.

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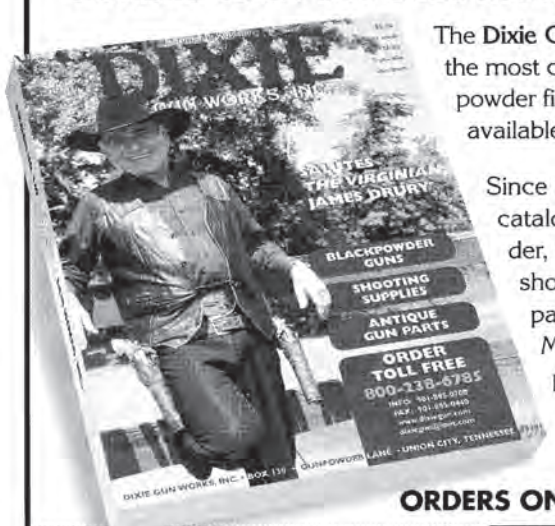
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Location, Location, Location

BY THADD TURNER

New Evidence Reveals the True Location of the Trial of Jack McCall

In a nearby cabin, Jack McCall awaited the ultimate sentence while a perfect pine limb swayed in the breeze. Where was the jury when they were creating this famous chapter in history—a trial that would be written about for 125 years?

Though the actual place of the shooting has been known for years, the McCall trial location has eluded even the most reputable writers and scholars. Was it the McDaniels Theatre, Langrishe Theatre, Deadwood Theatre, Gem Theatre and Dance Hall, or possibly the Bella Union Variety Theatre? Even the No. 10 Saloon has been suggested.

With the August 5 edition, the *Pioneer* became one of the first newspapers to report the shooting of Wild Bill Hickok and subsequent activities. The *Pioneer* reported that after the capture of Jack McCall,

> *. . . preparations for a trial were made by calling a meeting of citizens at the theatre building . . . and immediately after the theatre was over, the meeting was called to order, Judge Kuykendall presiding . . . it was decided to adjourn to meet at 9 o'clock A.M. Thursday, August 3rd.*

Probably, the most popularly misidentified location of the trial was the Bella Union Theatre. The Bella Union, however, was *not* the location of the trial, opening one month after the trial date.

Some writers have accepted stories by supposed eyewitnesses placing the McCall trial at the No. 10 Saloon. Wild Bill Hickok drank, gambled and died in the No. 10, but the brief next-day trial of Jack McCall was not held there.

However, the Saloon No. 10 may very well have been where the verdict "not guilty" was read after the first elements of the trial were held in the nearby theater. In his 1917 book, *Frontier Days—A True Narrative of Striking Events On The Western Frontier*, Judge William L. Kuykendall, the elected Judge of the trial, recalls,

> *. . . that night [August 3] one hundred and five men met behind closed doors in Langrishe's Theatre . . . to observe the proper formalities, I was selected as chairman. . . . after arguments of counsel* [the next day] *I charged the jury about sundown, and as the theatre could not be used that night, the saloon where the killing occurred was selected as the place to receive the verdict, the prisoner being confined in a cabin immediately in its rear, in front of which stood a large pine tree having a limb just right for the hanging.*

This tree, so conveniently in place to assist with the anticipated frontier justice, was not needed for Jack McCall in Deadwood. An 8'x 10' hangman's platform would be McCall's final destination on March 1, 1877 in Yankton, the capitol of Dakota Territory.

On July 22, the *Pioneer* provided a story of Langrishe's opening debut at the new Deadwood Theatre, which included the lead-in headline,

> *THE THEATRE- The Langrishe troupe will make their first appearance in their mammoth pavilion theatre, and give the first dramatic renditions ever witnessed in Western Dakota . . . we hope the enterprising manager will never have occasion to regret locating to Deadwood City. . . .*

The Deadwood Theatre was built for Langrishe by James McDaniels, from Cheyenne, Wyoming. Over the years, many writers and researchers have confused the theater that McDaniels built with the Bella Union Variety Theatre, the Langrishe Theatre, and even the fictitious McDaniels Theatre. McDaniels never had a separate theater operation in 1876 Deadwood. The Deadwood Theatre was the theater that McDaniels built for Jack Langrishe and his troupe.

Lawrence County's first appointed Sheriff, Seth Bullock, made note of the theater building in his unfinished history of the Black Hills. Published by Bullock's grandson, Kenneth C. Kellar, in his 1972 book, *Seth Bullock—Frontier Marshal*, Kellar writes that Bullock noted that,

> *Jack Langrishe and his theatrical troupe arrived in Deadwood . . . shortly before their arrival, a theatre had been erected on Main Street, thirty feet front by one hundred feet deep, with a canvas roof, as shingles had not yet made their appearance in camp. The theatre was*

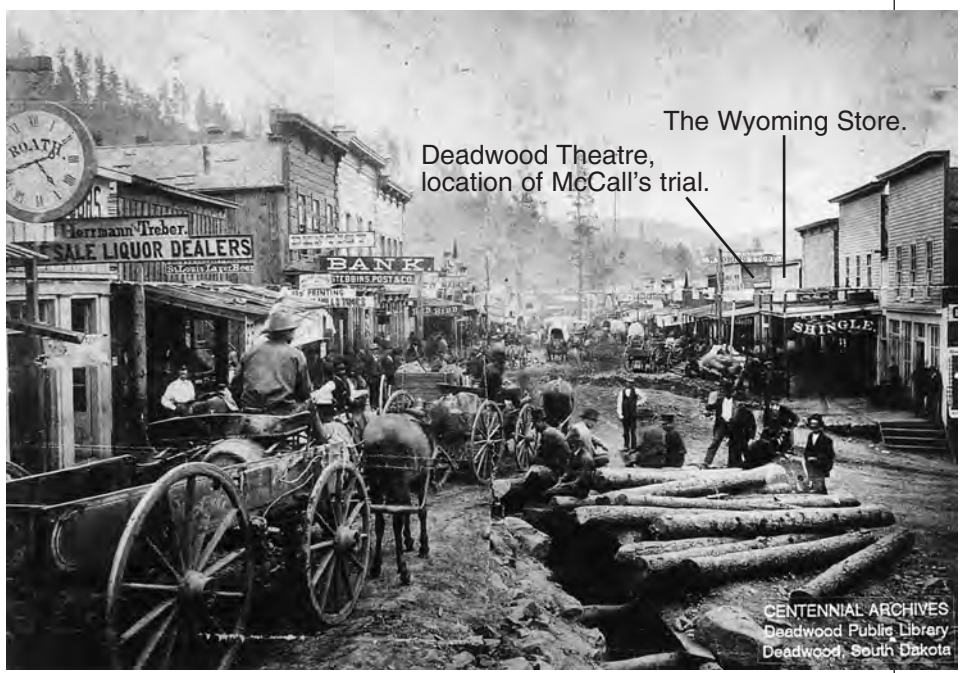


This photo probably best represents what Deadwood looked like when the Utter-Hickok party arrived in the gulch. The Deadwood theatre had yet to be constructed adjacent to the Senate Saloon (circled on photo).

- Courtesy South Dakota State Historical Society -

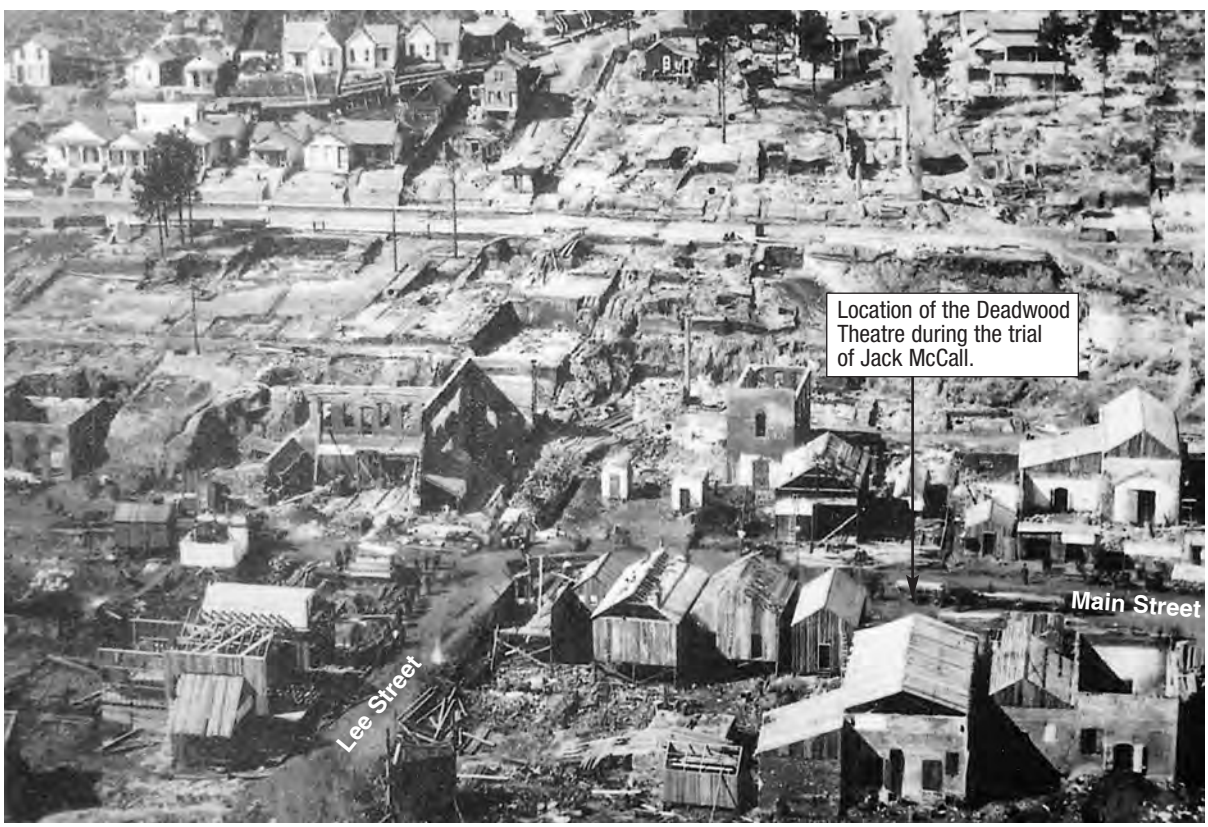
greatly appreciated by the citizens of the town for in the daytime it was used for murder trials, receptions, funeral services, dances, and other gatherings.

With this reference, and those previously mentioned, the original site of the Deadwood Theatre is certain. In addition, we now know the rest of the businesses on Main Street Deadwood in August of 1876. What it reveals is ironic: the current location of the new Old Style Saloon, where the reenactment of the shooting of Wild Bill Hickok occurs four times a day, is the original site of the Deadwood Theatre—the location of the Deadwood City trial of Jack McCall in the summer of 1876. Indeed a coincidence, coming on the 125th anniversary of this historic event.



Deadwood City, Main Street, the summer of 1877. The Wyoming Store occupies the narrow 20' frontage building located two doors down from Shingle's Saloon. Next, is the Deadwood Theatre with its 30' frontage and dark-colored facade.

- Courtesy of the Centennial Archives, Deadwood Public Library -



The intersection of Deadwood City's Main and Lee Streets taken after the September 26, 1879 fire. The view taken from Mount Moriah shows many structures under reconstruction. The Deadwood Theatre, location of Jack McCall's trial, occupied the vacant lot five doors down from the intersection of Main and Lee Streets.

- Curtesy of Don Clowser -

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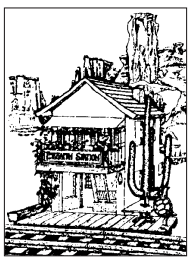
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Classics Illustrated, July 1954 comic.

JOSEPH ROSA

ON OBSESSION, POSSESSION, AND WILD BILL

A True West *Interview*

Joseph G. Rosa has spent over 40 years researching the truths, myths and legends of Wild Bill Hickok. He has produced five books on the subject, including, They Called Him Wild Bill: The Life and Adventures of James Butler Hickok, *which many consider the definitive Hickok biography. Rosa rarely sits for interviews, so when co-editor and fellow Wild Bill scholar, Thadd Turner conducted the following Q&A via the internet, we were all excited to get a personal and up-close visit with the Master of the Hickok "vault of knowledge." Rosa's most recent book,* Wild Bill Hickok: Gunfighter, *covers the gunfights of the legendary frontiersman in detail. Rosa lives in Ruislip, Middlesex, England.*

TW: When did you first discover Wild Bill?

Rosa: I first encountered Hickok in a movie when I was about seven years old. At that time, many youngsters, both sides of the Atlantic, regarded Western movies as a way of life, and we all had our favorite Western star. Mine was Buck Jones whose tragic death in 1942 came as a great shock. As for Hickok, I first saw him portrayed by Bruce Cabot in *Wild Bill Hickok Rides*; but it was Gary Cooper as Hickok in *The Plainsman* that really impressed me. I began reading and collecting anything I could find on Wild Bill, and by the early 1950s, I had discarded the Hollywood version and concentrated upon the real Hickok. In my youthful arrogance, I then decided I should write a book—little realizing how difficult that would be!

TW: Why do you think you found Hickok so fascinating?

Rosa: It was the enigma of a man who was both a romantic and a tragic figure that appealed to me. Let's face it, the name "Wild Bill Hickok" sounds romantic to child and adult, and in appearance he looked as most Easterners believed a Western gunfighter should look. In reality, of course, looks are immaterial. Rather, it is the character of the individual and how he handles himself and others that counts.

TW: Do you think you're obsessed with Hickok?

Rosa: Certainly, I would have liked to be able to fill in the gaps and add more facts, but I have never felt obsessed or possessed by Hickok. It came as a shock to learn at the Western History Conference in San Antonio last October that my old friend Leon Metz had reportedly been "possessed" by the evil spirit of John Wesley Hardin [while Metz was writing his book on Hardin]. I have heard nothing further on the subject and hope that it was only a tasteless rumor.



Joesph G. Rosa

TW: Many of us in the United States find it incredible that an Englishman would devote so much time and energy to researching an American legend. Did the distance across the Atlantic ever deter you from your quest for the truth?

Rosa: Distance was a problem, and my first attempts to gain information from America were not very successful. However, I was very determined and found that people, especially in historical societies were willing to answer questions, and United States postmasters often passed on letters to likely sources or individuals. I soon learned the art of asking the right questions, and explaining why I wanted the information. When I eventually met some of the people I had corresponded with, they told me that it was my enthusiasm and explicit requests that encouraged them to help.

At one point, I was sending three or four letters a month to the Kansas State Historical Society. These posed sometimes difficult questions, so the director, Nyle H. Miller, asked Joseph W. Snell (who himself later became the society's director) to undertake the task of answering my queries. Both Joe and Nyle later told me that my queries led to them learning more about Hickok and other gunfighters. Such sources proved invaluable when they began their own mammoth task that led to their 1963 publication *Why The West Was Wild* (later republished as *Great Gunfighters of the Kansas Cowtowns*, which is still in print).

TW: When They Called Him Wild Bill was first released in 1964, it contained an incredible amount of never-before-published material. Your personal access to the Hickok family and their archive is legendary. How did you gain their trust?

Rosa: When I first approached the Hickok family in the 1950s they were courteous but not forthcoming. After a century of such requests, and the occasional abuse from anti-Wild Billites, while they appreciated my interest, from such a distance, they were not prepared to help. Fortunately, my defense of Hickok when a newspaper defamed him (I forget where in Illinois this appeared) changed their attitude, and I was presented with a photograph of Wild Bill by Horace Hickok, one of Wild Bill's two surviving nephews, that I used on the jacket of my first book. The family was amazed by the amount of information I had gathered. Consequently, when I arrived at Troy Grove on October 6, 1965, in company with a friend from nearby Princeton, I was welcomed by Horace and his wife Louise. They showed me some Wild Bill items, and then insisted that I meet his sister Ethel who knew more about "Uncle Jim" than anyone. When I was introduced to her, she said that she was "mad at Horace" for not telling me about her when I was writing my book. Nevertheless, she, too, made me very welcome and soon we were poring over her

scrapbooks and other materials. It was the beginning of a friendship that lasted until her death in 1985 in her one-hundredth year. Besides Horace and Ethel, I had also corresponded with their brother Howard. Howard had been a thorn in the sides of a number of writers whom he accused of lying about his uncle, Jim, but when I got to know him, he was most helpful. I also learned something of his dealings with William E. Connelley in the 1920s.

TW: Tell us more about Ethel Hickok. What physical similarities or traits do you think she shared with her famous uncle?

Rosa: I do not know whether Ethel Hickok inherited any of her uncle's traits; but she was a remarkable lady. She was as "sharp as a tack," and might best be described as a female Harry Truman with a great sense of humor. On one occasion, she was approached by a lady who told her that her uncle Jim (as Ethel always referred to Wild Bill) had shot her uncle, to which Ethel replied: "Then I guess he needed killing." This amused the lady, and the pair became very friendly. Following her mother's death in 1932, Ethel took charge of the family archive, but was reluctant to share it. Although I corresponded with her regularly for seven years, and visited her for a couple of hours each October to discuss Uncle Jim, she would not divulge much. Then I made a dramatic breakthrough: I discovered where in England, in 1849, her mother, Martha Edwards Hickok, was born (the Edwards family emigrated to the United States in 1851 and settled in Troy Grove). I ordered a copy of her birth certificate which I mailed to Ethel. Her niece Edith Harmon later told me that when Ethel saw the British crown surmounting what was an official document, she burst into tears. My arrival some weeks later was greeted with an array of letters, and two very rare photographs of Wild Bill which were copied at my expense and used in the revised version of *They Called Him Wild Bill*, published in 1974.

I first met Edith Harmon during my early negotiations with Ethel. She was the family historian and author of two fine books on the subject (*Another Man Named Hickok,* about Wild Bill's great-grandfather Aaron and the early history of the family, and *Pioneer Settlers of Troy Grove* which covers the immediate family's history). Edith proved to be a tower of strength, and prior to the discovery of the birth certificate, had often interceded with Ethel on my behalf. Sadly, Edith died in July 2000 and is much missed; but she was glad that so much family history got into my books or has been preserved (much of it at the Kansas State Historical Society).

TW: It is evident from your relationship with the Hickoks that many people were of assistance to you. But what of those who either resented you, or considered you a rival? In particular, Mari Sandoz, who you mention in several of your books?

Rosa: Yes, I have had problems! Mari and I never saw eye to eye, and I still think she fictionalized materials to suit her text. You may recall that in her novel *The Buffalo Hunters* she claimed that Hickok had serious eyesight problems and visited the army surgeon at Camp Carlin, Wyoming Territory, who told him he had glaucoma which was incurable and he would soon go blind. Despite some intensive research, aided by an ex-senator from Nebraska and experts, no such report has been located. I later learned that Camp Carlin was only a remount depot and had no surgeon, the nearest one being at Fort D.A. Russell. Nothing was found in those records either. Now, we do know that Hickok had an eyesight problem in 1874. It was at first thought to be connected with the calcium lamps used during his stint with *Buffalo Bill's Combination*. He wore dark glasses for a while and during the next two years he was reported to have had some treatment, possibly in Kansas City where he knew the redoubtable Dr. Thorne. When I spoke to two eye surgeons they both said that glaucoma in someone of Hickok's age would be very rare and unlikely; but it could have been trachoma, a highly contagious disease of the eyelids which was painful and sight-threatening, but treatable. So, unless the army report or some conclusive evidence is found, Hickok's eye problem will remain the subject of speculation.

The late Paul Riley of the Nebraska State Historical Society once told me that had Mari and I met face-to-face, he believed that we would have got on. But I fear that this would not have been the case with the likes of Harry Sinclair Drago, Carl Breihan or James D. Horan, all of whom I "crossed pens" with at various times. Drago, an ex-B Western film-script writer achieved a good reputation as a novelist, but in my opinion did not do at all well with factual materials. Horan was a very capable individual but he, too, liked to manipulate his materials to suit his text. Breihan, however, was the only one of the three who engaged me in correspondence. He seemed to delight in inventing conversations and making unsupported statements. Why he did so I have no idea, for I think he could have achieved a great deal had he kept strictly to facts. Of course, I, too, have my critics, disgruntled rivals, and some who resent my nationality, my interpretation of Hickok and my success, yet would not be prepared to undertake such protracted research themselves. Others have declared me biased in Hickok's favor, which I admit I am when the facts justify it, and there are those who accuse me of not responding to criticism or accepting a different view point. As for that, I recall the late lamented Don Russell's reaction when confronted by critics of Buffalo Bill. Don said that he would be prepared to accept any criticism of Cody provided it was based upon fact. And then there was the occasion when I used the word "discovery" in connection with the Jack McCall pardon file. An erstwhile friend

"Fortunately, my defense of Hickok ... changed their attitude, and I was presented with a photograph of Wild Bill by Horace Hickok ..."

attacked me in print alleging that he had found it before I did, I had no right to claim it as a discovery—the fact that no one knew he had a copy did nothing to placate his anger! But the sobering comment came from Joseph W. Snell when, on one occasion, I told him that I had discovered an unknown newspaper reference to Hickok. He was delighted, but said "you have merely re-discovered something that was once public knowledge!" I guess that puts us all into perspective!



Gary Cooper, in The Plainsman, *1936. And although Gary Cooper doesn't look anything like him, he did inspire Rosa to begin his search for the truth about Wild Bill, and for that we thank him..*

— True West Archives —



Jeff Bridges as Hickok and Ellen Barkin as Calamity Jane in Wild Bill, *1995.*

— True West Archives —

TW: How did Colonel George Ward Nichol's romanticized article in Harper's New Monthly Magazine in 1867, which was littered with fiction, affect future stories about Wild Bill?

Rosa: It must be remembered that long before the *Harper's* article, Hickok was generally known in southwest Missouri and parts of Arkansas as "Wild Bill," and by 1865 he had also earned quite a reputation as a scout and spy for the Union. His employer, General John Sanborn, later stated that he was the best man he had. When Colonel Nichols appeared in Springfield in the summer of 1865 and met Hickok, he, too, was impressed with the man. Like most frontiersmen, Hickok was a great leg-puller, and it is unfortunate that despite some intensive searching for Nichol's journal and diary covering the period, they have not been found. If discovered, they might provide important clues both concerning the interview and whether Nichols or *Harper's* contributed to the fiction. Yes, *Harper's* did play a large part in perpetuating the Hickok myth, but don't forget that when reviewing the story, some editors made it clear that Hickok's real exploits were already well known in parts of Kansas and Missouri, especially the so-called McCanless "Massacre." Henry M. Stanley, soon after the publication of the *Harper's* yarn, contributed further to the debate and added some yarns that Hickok (or others) told him. This encouraged the border scriveners, who delighted in upping Hickok's tally of dead "bad men," to contribute toward the creation of a character totally unlike the original.

TW: When did James Butler Hickok become known as "Wild Bill?"

Rosa: Some claim that the name was bestowed upon him by Ned Buntline, others by James Buel, or that he invented it for himself. None of these explanations are true. Ethel Hickok said that her father Horace told her that he won the name in the Civil War. My own research disclosed that as early as 1856, for an indeterminate reason, James was known in Kansas as "William." Ethel recalled that somewhere in the family, someone had been called "Billy Barnes" and that James used that name on occasion. In the *Harper's* yarn, Hickok said he borrowed it from a Texan he had known when spying. Similarly, some official records prior to, and during the Civil War, do show him as William Hickok.

George Hance, a friend of the Hickoks, alleged that James won the name "Wild Bill" at Independence early in the war when he stopped the lynching of a bartender. But his brother Horace's reference to the Civil War is probably the most likely explanation. Indeed, William Pound, the prosecutor in McCall's trial at Yankton, stated in 1877, that Hickok won the name "Wild Bill" for his actions against Confederate guerrillas and bushwhackers in Missouri during the war. Pound is believed to have based his information on conversations with men who had known or fought with Hickok during that conflict. But whatever the origin of the name, it was to immortalize James Butler Hickok.

TW: What if Jack McCall's first shot had misfired?

Rosa: Had McCall's pistol misfired, we can assume that Hickok would have shot him dead—or others might have restrained Jack. In any event, Wild Bill would have survived. What we cannot predict, of course, is what might have happened to Hickok later. Someone else might have tried to kill him to gain a cheap reputation. Or, perhaps, he may have prospected and found gold and sent for his wife, or gone back East to her. We will never know. But because of his tragic end, there will always be those who will speculate as to what might have happened "if." . . . Meantime, the real and imaginary Wild Bill Hickok remains a folklore hero and a frontier icon.

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JUNE

15-17, **Wild Bill Hickok Days:** Deadwood, SD.
Information: 605-578-1876

JULY

6-7-8, **Tombstone Western Film Festival and Symposium:** Tombstone, AZ. The Arizona Western Heritage Foundation, Cochise County and the City of Tombstone team up to celebrate the impact of the Wyatt Earp saga on Hollywood westerns.
Information: 520-457-2358

18-21, **WOLA's (Western Outlaw-Lawman History Association) 11th Annual Convention:** Guthrie, OK. Twelve major presenters, two bus tours, receptions, book signing and banquet.
Information: 580-588-2093.

21-22, **White Mountain Native American Arts Festival:** Pinetop, AZ. More than 85 Southwest Native American artists display and sell their creations while demonstrating the crafts.
Information: 520-367-4290.

24-29, **Days of '76 Celebration and Rodeo:** Deadwood, SD. Come find out why the Days of '76 is the Black Hills premier event.
Information: 605-578-1876

27-Aug. 5, **Dodge City Days:** Dodge City, KS. This 10-day celebration hosts a major country music concert, Dodge City Days rodeo, craft shows, children's events, barbecue contest, parade, and the crowning of Miss Rodeo Kansas.
Information: 316-227-3119.

AUGUST

1-4, **Memphis Film Festival:** Memphis, TN. The festival celebrates its 30th Anniversary. Guests include Mason Alan Dinehart III from TV's Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp, Jon Locke from Gunsmoke, Republic Western Queen Peggy Stewart and many others.
Information: 901-452-1940 or www.memphisfilmfestival.com

4-5, **Historic O'Keefe Ranch Cowboy Festival and Real Wild West Show:** Vernon, B.C., Canada. Cowboy poetry and music, ranch rodeo, crafts and arts exhibit. Wild West Show and Frontier Exposition with reenactments featuring Captain Jack Crawford, George "Flat Nose" Curry, and a cast of other frontier characters.
Information: 250-542-7868
or Email: okr_chin@junction.net

9-12, **SASS Ohio State Championship Guns of August:** New Lebanon, Ohio. Limited to the first 200 shooters. All SASS rules apply. Twelve main stages, side matches, cowboy trap and skeet and best dressed contest.
Information: 513-422-5112 or email rrickey@siscom.net

10-12, **Mesika Illahee Pow-wow:** Siletz, OR. A celebration featuring Native American dancers and drummers. Also includes Native food and craft vendors.
Information: 800-922-1399 or email: craigw@ctsi.nsn.us

11-12 **Whoop-Up Wild West Weekend:** Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.
Reenactors representing North West Mounted Police, 1885 era Canadian frontier Militias, and fur traders encamped at historic replica of original Fort Whoop-Up. Family entertainment.
Information: 403-329-0444.

16-18, **14th Annual Arizona Cowboy Poets Gathering:** Prescott, AZ. Evening performances by Don Edwards, Desert Sons, Due West Trio, Dan Roberts and Sonny Hancock at the Yavapai College Performance Hall. Free daytime sessions at Sharlot Hall Museum.
Information: 520-445-3122 or www.sharlot.org

17-19, **Montana Cowboy Poetry Gathering:** Lewistown, MT. Performers come from as far as Florida and New York to take part in this middle-of-nearly-nowhere festival. Plenty of music sessions, and a horse camp trading post.
Information: 406-538-5436 or www.lewistownchamber.com/mepg.htm

24-26, **Kool Deadwood Nites:** Deadwood, SD. Relive the 50s and 60s with this three-day event.
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24-26 **Northern Plains Heritage Festival:** Dickinson, ND. Celebrate Dakota's heritage by discovering the North Dakota pioneer spirit with a Crazy Quilter's display, ethnic foods, crafts and entertainment.
Information: 701-225-5115.

25-26 **Rosebud Pow-wow and Rodeo:** Rosebud, SD.
Information: 605-856-2625.

30, **Mountain Man Rendezvous and Living History Days:** Angel Fire, NM. Mountain Man camp include black powder and cowboy shooting matches, 1800s period dress contests, knife and tomahawk throwing matches and music.
Information: 505-377-6661.

31-Sept. 2 **Native American Traditional Inter-Tribal Pow-wow:** Topeka, KS. Annual Pow-wow includes craft and food concessions, education day, culture seminars and dancing.
Information: 785-272-5489.

31-Sept 2 **Civil War Days:** Fort Dodge, IA. Relive the Civil War era with a weekend of activities for the entire family.
Information: 515-573-4231.

31-Sept. 3, **Black Hills Mounted Shooting State Championships:** Deadwood, SD. Live radio broadcast.
Information: 605-578-1876

SEPTEMBER

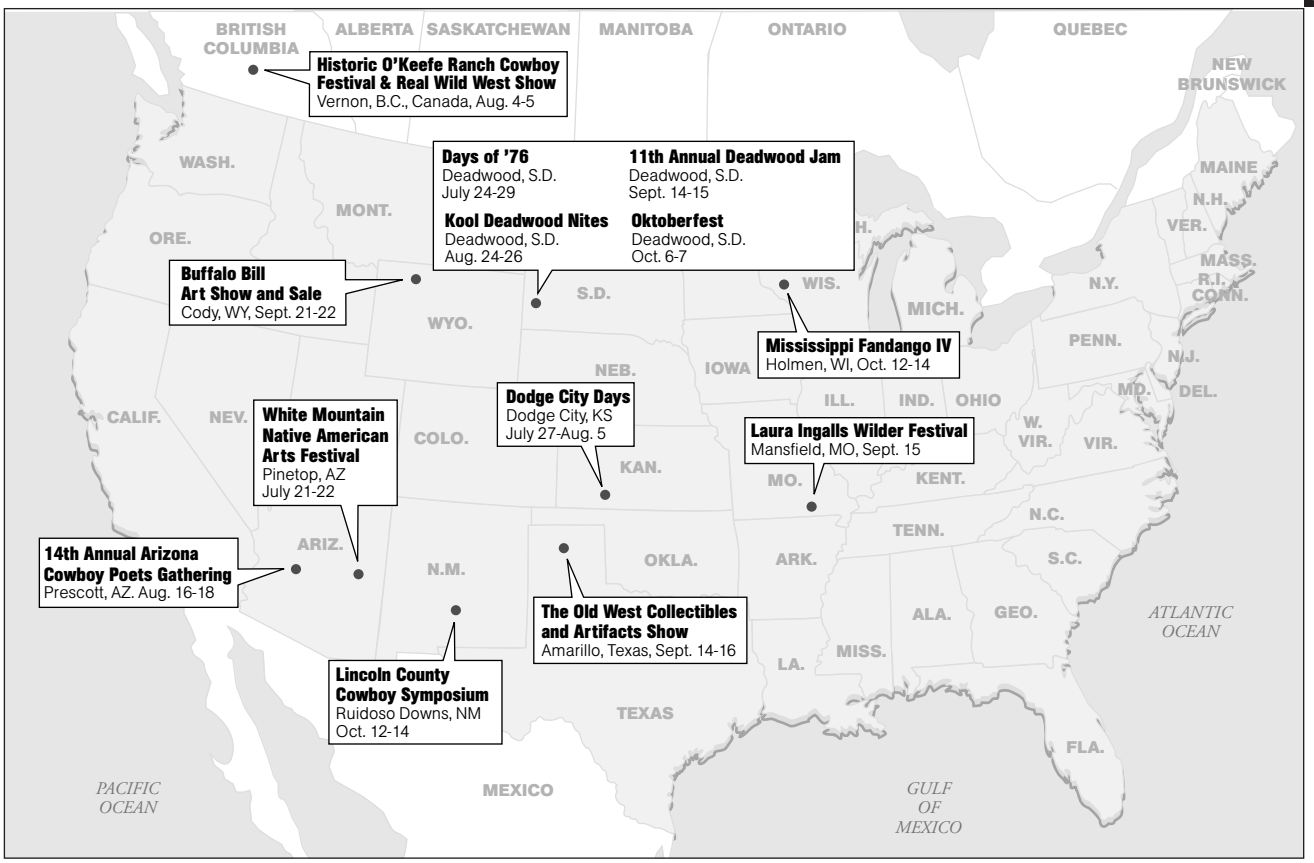
1-2 **Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Fair, Pow-wow and Rodeo:** Eagle Butte, SD.
Information: 605-964-4000.

1-3, **Return of the Old West Roundup:** Reagan, OK. Three day celebration of the Old West and Western heritage. Gunfights, Western music, Native American dance, flea market, poetry, children's activities and more.
Information: 580-384-5536 or www.getawayok.com/getawayok050.htm or email: sipokniwest@hotmail,com

6-8, **A Celebration of the Old:** Kanab, UT. Celebrate the Old West and Western movies, over 200 of which were filmed around Kanab. Celebrities, movie sets, reenactments, Navajo weavers, cowboy poets, mountain men and food.
Information: 435-644-3176
or bronco@xpressweb.com



Crazy Horse Memorial. *Now in progress and open all year around, the project, began with the first blast in 1948 in the Black Hills of South Dakota, was the vision of late sculptor Korczak Ziolkowski (1908-1982). When finished, the mountain carving will be the centerpiece of a vast educational and cultural complex honoring all North American tribes.*



14-15, **11th Annual Deadwood Jam:** Deadwood, SD. Two days of rock, country, reggae and blues music in this historic city.
Information: 605-578-1876

14-15, **North Dakota Rodeo Association Rodeo Finals:** Dickinson, ND. Labor Day fun for the whole family. Kid's show-d-o and full blown adult rodeo including calf roping, bull riding, steer wrestling, barrel racing, and more.
Information: 701-974-3737 or www.ndrodeo.com

14-16, **The Old West Collectibles & Artifacts Show:** Amarillo, TX. Dealers specializing in frontier artifacts, cowboy collectibles, Western art and jewelry, Civil War and mountain man memorabilia.
Information: 806-353-7666 or email keith@amaonline.com

15 **Laura Ingalls Wilder Festival:** Mansfield, MO. A festival in memory of the author of the *Little House* series of books. Many family activities.
Information: 417-924-3525.

21-22 **Buffalo Bill Art Show and Sale:** Cody, WY. Key event of Rendezvous Royale, Cody's celebration of the arts.
Information: 307-587-5002 or www.buffalobillartshow.org

23-24 **National Congress of Old West Shootists' Gun-Fire in the Hills:** Logan, IA. Limited to the first 100 pre-registered shooters. Vendors and camping on site. Eight stages plus cowboy clay shooting side match and team matches.
Information: 402-572-1599.

28-29, **Cowboy Trappings and Trade Show:** Medicine Lodge, KA. Fine handmade saddles, bits, spurs, western art decor and fashion. Kansas Ranch Cowboys and Cowgirls will perform in working ranch events.
Information: 316-886-9815 or www.peacetreaty.org

OCTOBER

Now through Oct 21, **Hubbard Museum of the American West Gun Show:** Ruidoso Downs, NM. Exhibition of 19th century firearms including weapons owned by Wyatt Earp, Tom Horn and others.
Information: 505-378-4142

4-7, **Western History Association Annual Conference:** San Diego, CA.
Information: www.oldwestalive.com

6-7, **Oktoberfest:** Deadwood, SD. Join us and celebrate Oktoberfest "Deadwood" style.
Information: 605-578-1876

12-14, **Mississippi Fandango IV:** Holmen, WI. Largest S.A.S.S. shoot in Wisconsin! Limited to the first 200 shooters.
Information: 608-269-2450 or 608-788-6966 orvisitwwwbunch.homestead.com/Fandango2001.html

12-14, **Lincoln County Cowboy Symposium:** Ruidoso Downs, NM. Voted the Nation's Best Cowboy Cultural Event by the National Cowboy Symposium Association. Cowboy poets, storytellers, cooks, artists, vendors and music by The Texas Playboys, Leroy Parnell, Marty Stewert and Michael Martin Murphy.
Information: 505-378-4142 or visit http://www.ziznet.com/lccs/ or email: sunny@ruidoso.k12.nm.us

19-20, **Chisholm Trail Arts and Cowboy Festival:** Duncan, OK. Held at the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center, 1000 N. 29th.
Information: 580-252-6692 or www.onthechisholmtrail.com

20, **Adai Caddo Indian Nation Pow-wow:** Robeline, LA. Daylong celebration of Adai Caddo Indian heritage filled with traditional dances, food, arts, crafts and displays.
Information: 800-259-1714 or www.natchitoches.net/events/

26, **Tucson Bluegrass Festival:** Tucson, AZ. Three days of super picking, workshops, contests, concessions, jamming and more.
Information: 520-296-1231 or email: basslady@att.net

NOVEMBER

10-11, **Wichita Intertribal Warrior's Society Pow-wow:** Wichita, KS. Enjoy Native American dancers and singers at this Pow-wow. Proceeds benefit the Warrior's Society.
Information: 316-262-5221 or www.theindiancenter.com/icevents.html

Submissions to Western Roundup are welcome. Send all information and photos at least three months in advance to: Roundup, P.O. Box 8008, Cave Creek, AZ 85327 or email them to: calendar@truewestmagazine.com



BILL HICKOK

FROM OUR MAY/JUNE, 1959 ISSUE

BY LEONARD HAROLD BOUCHER

GOLDEN TALES FROM THE TRUE WEST STRONGBOX

HOW WILD BILL HICKOK LOST HIS HEAD

In the good old days, Wild Bill Hickok was reported as being a very cool customer. He remained calm during an argument or gunfight and never lost his head. Not while he lived, that is.

To get quickly to the heart of the story, we must go back to Bill's burial in Deadwood, South Dakota, in 1876. The great gunslinger was originally interred in Boothill, but later on his body was exhumed and buried in Mount Moriah Cemetery. To date, his grave has been decorated by no less than five markers, two of wood, two stone and one life-size statue, also stone.

The original wood marker was placed on Hickok's grave by a close friend, C.H. Utter, who has these words inscribed:

Wild Bill, J.B. Hickok. Killed by the assassin Jack McCall in Deadwood, Black Hills, August 2, 1876. Pard, we will meet again in the happy hunting ground to part no more. Goodbye. Colorado Charlie, C.H. Utter.

Through the years, Wild Bill's grave has been visited by hundreds of tourists, and—like all people the world over—many were souvenir hounds. Take-home souvenirs were practically nil as far as Bill's grave was concerned—but there was always the wooden marker. Years ago, most tourists didn't lug cameras, so in lieu of pictures, they hacked off pieces of the marker. Eventually, in order to preserve the marker for posterity, it was removed. Now [1959] it is on exhibition in the Wild Bill Bar, the authentic scene of his death.

The next marker was stone. It was too heavy to carry away and too hard to chip—or so everyone thought. The souvenir hounds must have had a sixth sense, for they apparently came equipped with miners' picks or sledge hammers. Anyhow, chip by chip, the stone disappeared.

The next stone marker suffered the same fate, and it was replaced by a life-size statue, also stone. A protective fence was erected around the grave, but the vandalism started again on a minor scale.

Years passed. The statue stood guard over the grave without suffering much damage until one day during World War II, the head was discovered to be missing. It has never been recovered, nor has the identity of the person who took it ever been established.

The headless statue remained on the grave for a number of years before it was removed and placed in the Adams Memorial Museum in Deadwood. The present marker is a replica of the original wooden one erected by Bill's pal, Charlie Utter.

Some doubt exists as to when the last two stone markers were erected, or by whom. I have been unable to pin down names or dates. The first marker was believed to have been erected in 1891, the artist being J.H. Riordan.

So there you have the story of how Wild Bill lost his head, 67 years after he died! A record, don't you think?



Stereo photo of Wild Bill's grave taken shortly after his murder.

- COURTESY ROBERT G. MCCUBBIN -

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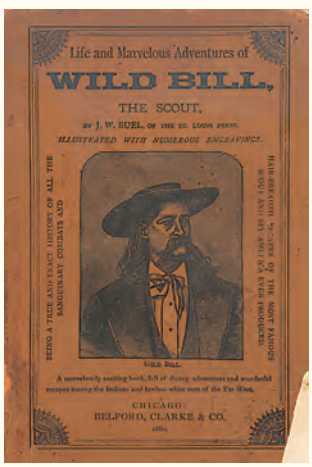
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TRUE WEST

A Word On Wild Bill

There have been numerous books and articles written about Wild Bill Hickok over the past 135 years. Listed below are the best source material available on this remarkable Old West figure, and others we've revealed as promoting only myth.



* ***Life and Marvelous Adventures of Wild Bill the Scout***, 1880, by J.W. Buel, Historical Publishing Co., New York and St. Louis, $2500. As indicated by the price, one of the rarest books on Hickok. Though it seems to presage *Heroes of the Plains*, this book is a *must* have for the collector, but should be regarded as "factional" by the historian.

* ***Heroes of The Plains***, 1882, by J.W. Buel, Historical Publishing Co., New York and St. Louis, $85, $250 for first edition. This work, unfortunately, contains a lot of fiction which has contributed to Hickok's mythology—not what you would expect coming from a news reporter. Nevertheless, if one reads carefully, some factual information may be gleaned.

* ***Hard Knocks—A Life Story of The Vanishing West***, 1915, by Harry S. Young, Wells & Company, Portland, Oregon, $175. Young was the bartender on duty inside the No. 10 Saloon when Wild Bill was shot and killed. His narration of the event has some flaws, but having been an eyewitness, there is credibility to his story.

* ***Frontier Days—A True Narrative of Striking Events on The Western Frontier***, 1917, by W. L. Kuykendall, edited and published by J.M. Kuykendall and H.L. Kuykendall. Judge Kuykendall was elected the presiding judge at the Deadwood City trial of Jack McCall. His recollection of that event deserves strong merit for accuracy, specifically his retelling of how the gruesome Indian head trophy was paraded around Main Street after the shooting of Wild Bill. Collectors price.

* ***Wild Bill Hickok—The Prince of Pistoleers***, 1926, by Frank J. Wilstach, Doubleday Page & Co., (Republished in 1939 as *The Plainsman, Wild Bill Hickok*, The Sun Dial Press). $45-$75. Wilstach, a former theatrical press agent, was influenced by biographical books published in the early part of the century containing alleged eyewitness accounts of Wild Bill's murder. However, Wilstach did provide the first thoroughly researched information on those inside the No. 10 Saloon at the time of the shooting.

* ***The Real Wild Bill Hickok***, 1931, by Wilbert Eisele, William H. Andre, Denver, Colorado, $35. Eisele's book follows Buel's work closely, but he does include some material of interest, in particular, the text of an uncredited play about Wild Bill, circa the 1870s or 1880s.

* ***Wild Bill and His Era***, 1933, by William E. Connelley, The Press of the Pioneers, New York, $75- $100. Connelley, Secretary of the Kansas State Historical Society for many years, began his research into the Hickok story in the 1880s in Springfield, Missouri and continued in Topeka. The result was impressive, however, his daughter, who edited his manuscript for publication, had discarded much of the original material and (with his blessing) added her version of events.

* ***California Joe***, 1935, by Joe E. Milner and Earle R. Forrest, Caxton Printers Ltd., $200. Moses E. Milner was one of Wild Bill's closest friends. Milner's grandson wrote this book which is full of fascinating events about this frontier scout's life time. Aside from some exaggerations, the book has a lot of facts, albeit difficult to separate the two. Unfortunately, co-author, Earle R. Forrest was given little opportunity by the Milner family to amend or delete some of the dubious information included, otherwise this book would have been a classic. Collectors price.

* ***Pioneer Days in The Black Hills***, 1939, by John S. McClintock, J.J. Ives & Company, re-issued in 2000 by the University of Oklahoma Press, $30. McClintock claimed to have arrived in the Black Hills in early 1876, and let the Utter-Hickok wagon train set up camp on his Whitewood Creek mining claim when the party arrived. Though their arrival date is wrong, most of McClintock's description of early Deadwood City is accurate.

* ***The Buffalo Hunters***, by Mari Sandoz, 1954, Hastings House, New York, $35. More fittingly categorized as fiction, this book features several tall tales. First, is her accusation that Wild Bill murdered Chief Whistler and two other Indians of the Cut-off band of Sioux in Nebraska in 1872. Next, she claims that Hickok suffered from glaucoma and that he would soon go blind. Ramon Adams in his *Six Guns and Saddle Leather*, summed up one of Sandoz's tall stories, by declaring it to be "ridiculous." Though well written, with his summation, we concur.

* ***Wild Bill Hickok***, by Richard O'Connor, 1959, Doubleday & Co.,

Garden City New York, $10-$15. This book is very enjoyable but is based upon previous volumes rather than original research, and adds nothing new to the Hickok saga.

* ***Why the West Was Wild***, by Nyle H. Miller and Joseph W. Snell, 1963, The Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas (republished in 1967 by the Nebraska State Historical Society as *Great Gunfighters of the Kansas Cowtowns 1867-1886*), $35. Originally a popular series in the Society's *Quarterly* in 1961, then published in book form, this work contains many previously unknown newspaper reports and official documents proving an invaluable reference for scholars and buffs.

* ***Wild Bill Hickok, Prince of Pistoleers***, 1939, by Edward L. Senn, a pamphlet, private printing, Deadwood, South Dakota, $125. This small, self-published book (the title remarkably similar to Wilstach's) features a thoroughly researched and accurately placed No. 10 Saloon —no small feat.

* ***They Called Him Wild Bill, The Life and Adventures of James Butler Hickok***, 1964, by Joseph G. Rosa, University of Oklahoma Press. $30. Second Edition released in 1974. The definitive Wild Bill Hickok biography. Following its publication, Rosa spent an additional 10 years gathering material and, thanks to Wild Bill's niece Ethel Hickok, also gained access to the Hickok family archive. Thus, the 1974 edition contains letters written by Hickok in the 1850s, and other new materials.

* ***Alias Jack McCall—A Pardon or Death?***, 1967, by Joseph G. Rosa, Kansas Posse of the Westerners. $12-$15. The first complete account of the Yankton trial of Jack McCall, this work includes the original testimony from those present at the shooting of Wild Bill in addition to McCall's pardon file. Long out of print, an updated version was published in 1999 as *Jack McCall, Assassin: An Updated Account of His Yankton Trial, Plea for Clemency, and Execution.*

* ***I Buried Hickok—The Memoirs of White Eye Anderson***, 1980, by William B. Secrest, The Early West (Creative Publishing Company), $30. Secrest is another author that demands historical accuracy and factual detail. Joseph Anderson was one of the original members of the Utter-Hickok party that arrived in Deadwood Gulch. Anderson's eyewitness recollections of the events in 1876 Deadwood, along with Secrest's excellent and well-researched chapter notes, provide one of the most interesting accounts available on the last days of Wild Bill's life.

* ***The West of Wild Bill Hickok***, 1982, by Joseph G. Rosa, University of Oklahoma Press. $16-$20. His second book on Wild Bill in Deadwood, this book features over 200 original photos, including the most comprehensive collection of Hickok photographs available in print.

* ***Tales Never Told Around The Campfire—True Stories of Frontier America***, 1992, by Mark Dugan, Swallow Press/Ohio University Press, Athens, Ohio, $35. This book relies on the information given to Mrs. Jennie Williams who took care of Sarah in her last years. Though not everyone will agree with the author's conclusions on the Rock Creek fracas, they will undoubtedly congratulate the author on his research into the enigma that was Sarah Shull.

* ***Wild Bill Hickok, The Man & His Myth***, 1996, by Joseph G. Rosa, University Press of Kansas. $30—a careful analysis of the real stories and truths about the Hickok legend, and the debunking of many of the fabrications surrounding Wild Bill's earlier exploits. Excellent source material for a clear evaluation of the Hickok legacy.

* ***Colorado Charlie—Wild Bill's Pard***, 1968, by Agnes Wright Spring, Pruett Press, $15, Spring is one of the best for historical accuracy and factual information. Charlie Utter buried Hickok and was one of his most intimate friends. It was Charlie's decision to buy Hickok's second grave plot that saved Wild Bill from being exhumed and exhibited in an Eastern museum when it was discovered that his body had become petrified from chemicals in the soil.

New Titles

* ***Wild Bill Hickok: Gunfighter***, 2000, by Joseph G. Rosa, The Early West, (Creative Publishing) College Station, Texas, $29.95, hard cover. The most widely published author on Wild Bill today, Joe Rosa explores the gunfights of Hickok in a detailed step-by-step analysis. Also featured, are the types of guns that were used by the shoot-out participants, including the different methods used to draw their weapons into action.

* ***Wild Bill Hickok: Deadwood City—End of Trail***, 2001, by Thadd M. Turner, Universal Publishers, $24.95 soft cover, Old West Alive Publishing, $29.95 hard cover. Having spent two years in Deadwood researching all available local sources, Thadd Turner presents the most complete description to date of the No. 10 Saloon's interior layout, and the placement of all those present at the shooting of Wild Bill. A detailed analysis of the subsequent flight and capture of Jack McCall, including his Deadwood trial, is based on an all new layout of Deadwood, August 1876.

Correction: In last month's reviews we featured a book titled In Search of the Wild Indian *by Tom Driebe. The publisher's correct address is: P. O. Box 714, Pocono Press, PA, 18350. Their toll-free number is: 800-391-0011.*

ASK THE MARSHALL

MARSHALL TRIMBLE



Early photo of Big Nose Kate, date unknown.
- SHARLOT HALL MUSEUM -

Q Do you know of any pictures of Big Nose Kate? I can't seem to find any.

Ray Frady
Via the Internet

A Yes, there are a couple. At left is the earliest known photo of Kate, whose real name was Mary Katherine Haroney.

Q I've heard that Julesburg, Colorado, is named after an outlaw. Please explain.

Eric Baker
Durango, Colorado

A Jules Reni, for whom Julesburg is named, was a station operator for the Overland Stage Company. He later fell into troublesome company, became an outlaw and was shot to death.

Q I read one time, but can't remember in what book, about the good quality of "blue ice" that was available to Tombstone residents during its heyday. They used it to chill oysters and in drinks. I think the ice came from Alaska via San Francisco in the hull of ships. Can you shed any light on this?

Spencer Ward
Gaithersburg, Maryland

A By the late 1800s, ice was being shipped into Tombstone from Benson, Tucson, and Las Vegas, New Mexico. It is possible glacial "blue ice" could have been shipped in from as far away as Alaska.

Q In the history books we learn that gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill and that precipitated the famous Gold Rush of 1849. Someone told me that gold was actually discovered much earlier in the West. Is that true?

Lorette Warren
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

A Yes, it's true. Jose Ortiz discovered gold south of Santa Fe in 1832. The boomtown of Delores sprang from the strike and it is credited with being the first strike in the West.

Q Why did so many Western-bound wagon trains use oxen instead or horses of mules?

Joshua Young
Star Valley, Arizona

A Oxen were slower than mules or horses, but they had their advantages, such as they ate less, required less care, and they could pull heavier loads. And while a mule or horse could cost $90, an ox could be bought for about $50.

Q I know glass window panes were scarce in the early West. So, what did the early pioneers use?

Junior Wilkes
Monahans, Texas

A Many settlers fit their windows with panes made of cloth, greased paper, and even sheets of mica.



The window in this pioneer cabin seems to have a glass-pane substitute. Could it be cloth, greased paper or perhaps even sheets of mica?
- TRUE WEST ARCHIVES -



Outlaw-turned-baby-sitter Arkansas Tom.
- GLENN SHIRLEY COLLECTION -

Q I've heard Arkansas Tom ended his outlaw days in a rather humiliating way, but I haven't found out exactly how. What happened to him?

Don Danforth
San Diego, California

A Arkansas Tom was shot to death in 1924 while baby-sitting.

Marshall Trimble is Arizona's official historian. His books include *Law of the Gun*, and *Never Give A Heifer A Bum Steer*.
If you have a question, write:
Ask the Marshall,
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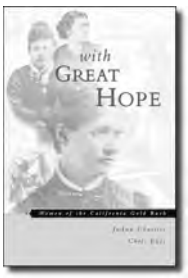
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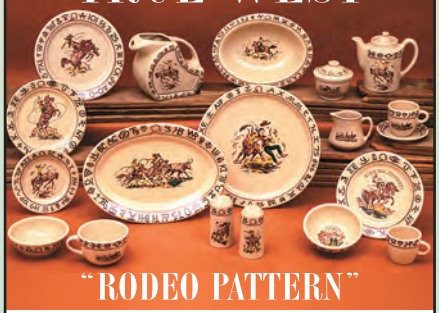
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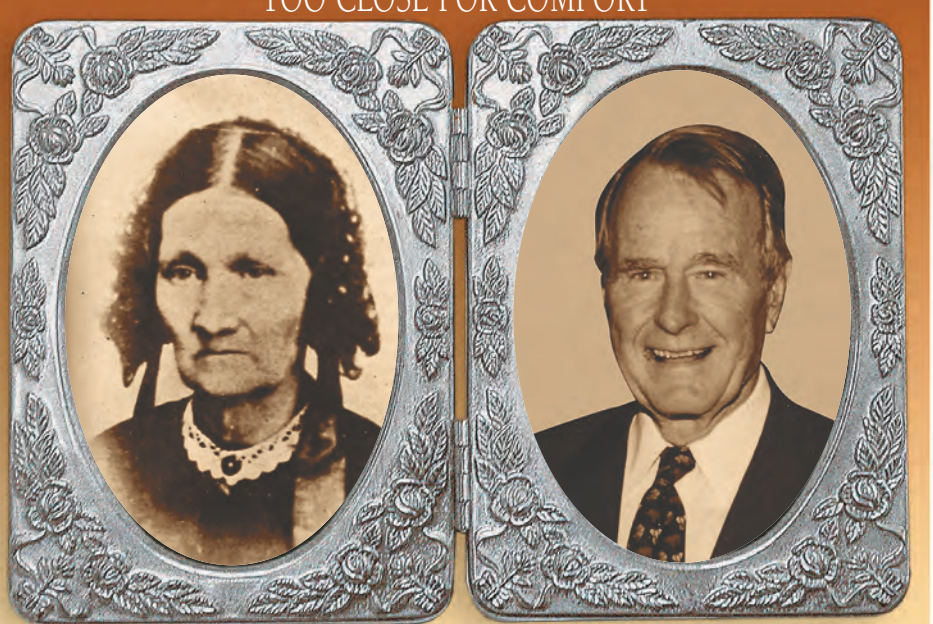
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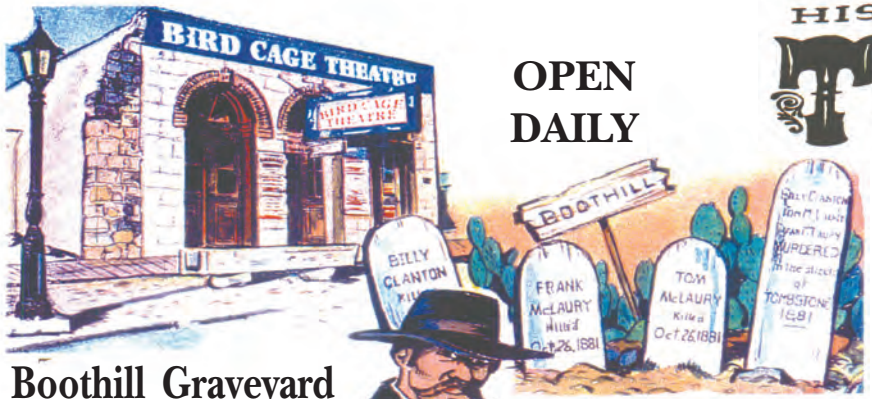


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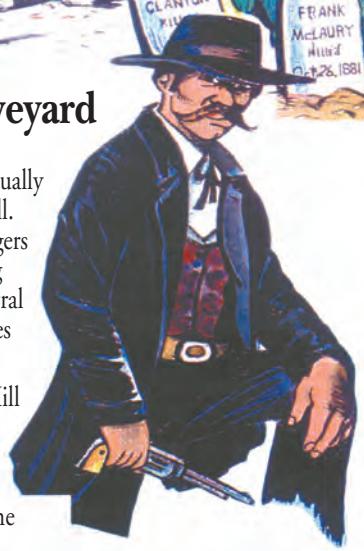
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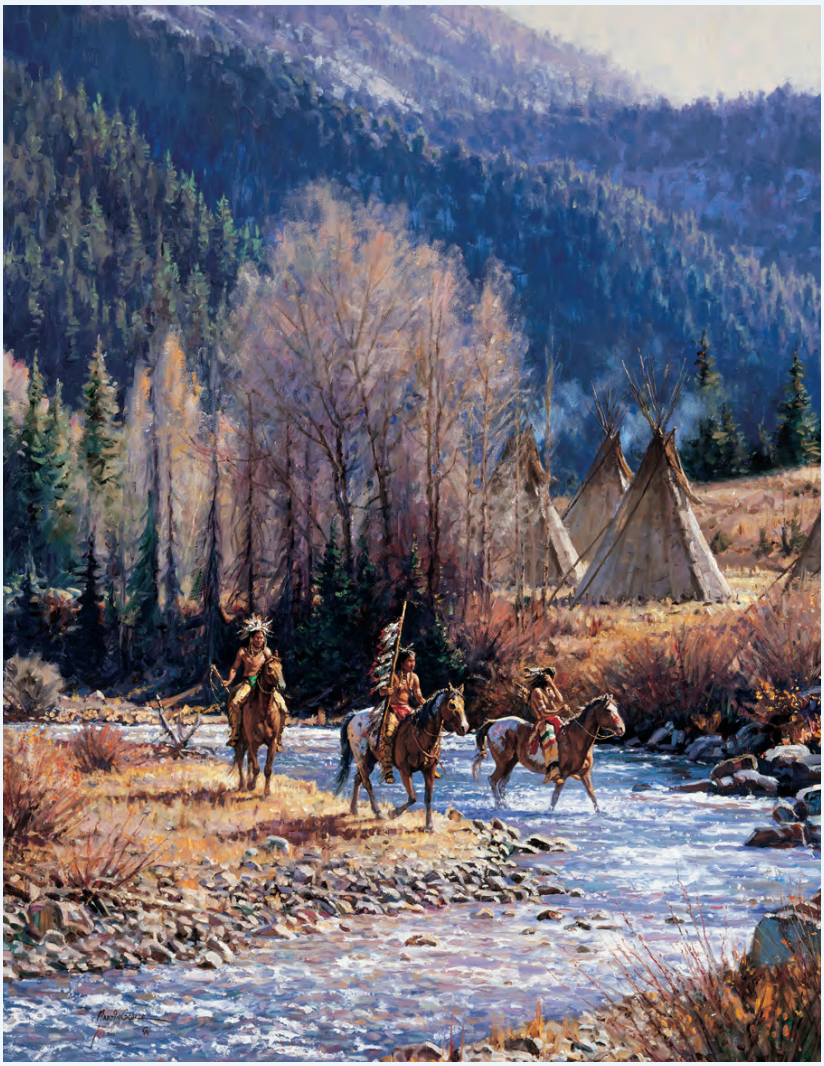


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