

# TRUE WEST

HISTORY OF THE FRONTIER

JUNE 2020  
OUR 67TH YEAR

## WHO KILLED CUSTER?

THE TRUTH BEHIND  
THE LEGEND OF  
SIOUX WARRIOR  
RAIN-IN-THE-FACE

BY JAMES B. MILLS

PLUS:

CURLY THE CROW SCOUT:  
HERO OR GOAT?

WE REMEMBER  
ROBERT G. McCUBBIN  
1937-2020

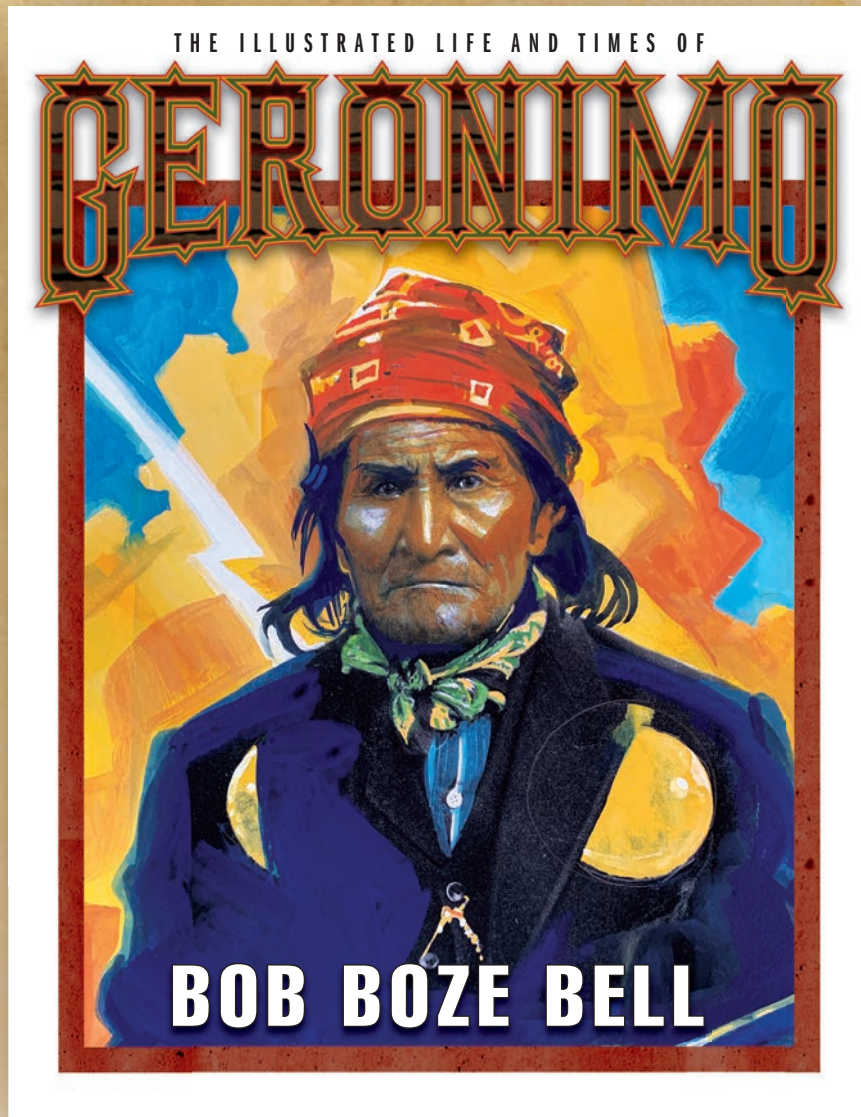
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—Paul Andrew Hutton



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After the war, he was appointed Lieutenant Colonel in the Regular Army and was sent west to fight the Indian Wars. On June 25, 1876 while leading the 7th Calvary Regiment at the Battle of the Little Bighorn in the Montana Territory against a coalition of Native Tribes, he was killed, along with all 5 companies he lead after splitting the regiment into 3 battalions. This action became known as "Custer's Last Stand."

His dramatic end was controversial like the rest of his career and opinions remain deeply divided. Some claim Custer's leadership in battle as reckless or foolhardy. However, he meticulously scouted every battlefield, gauged the enemies weak points and strengths, ascertained the best line of attack and only after he was satisfied was the "Custer Dash" with a Michigan yell focused with complete surprise on the enemy in routing them every time. Custer's bold leadership remains unquestioned, but his legend is partly of his own making through his extensive journalism and perhaps more through the energetic lobbying of his wife Libbie Custer all the rest of her life.

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— COURTESY LITTLE BIGHORN BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL MONUMENT, LIBI\_00300\_10561, NPS.GOV, KROTZENBERG —



True West captures the spirit of the West with authenticity, personality and humor by providing a necessary link from our history to our present.

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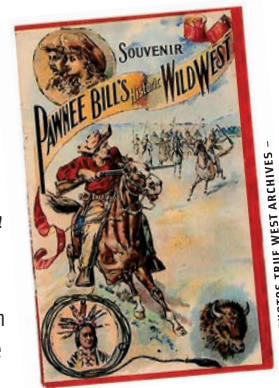
# True West Online >

## TrueWestMagazine.com



This colorful souvenir program dates from around 1888, when Pawnee Bill and his wife launched their first Wild West show. See more historical documents on True West's Pinterest.

[Pinterest.com/TWmag.com](https://www.pinterest.com/TWmag.com)



— ALL PHOTOS TRUE WEST ARCHIVES —

This grizzly photograph shows the posse that brought outlaw Ned Christie to justice. They posed with Christie's dead body on a board, holding his 1873 Winchester rifle. Get your daily dose of Old West history on True West's Facebook page.

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Bob Boze Bell gives a glimpse into his home art studio. Get more True West behind the scenes on our Executive Editor's daily blog, Bob Boze Bell's Big Bad Book of Diary Entries.

[Blog.TrueWestMagazine.com](https://www.blog.truewestmagazine.com)



Labeled "The Genuine Cow Boy Captured Alive," this 1880s cabinet card shows "Cottonwood Charlie" Nebo (at left) with Nicholas Janis, a French-American homesteader in Nebraska Territory and a descendant (or possibly brother) of Joseph Antoine, an interpreter at Fort Laramie in Wyoming Territory. Find more historical photos on our Instagram.

[Instagram.com/TWMag](https://www.instagram.com/TWMag)



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A premier collector is remembered for his generous spirit and love of the Old West.

—By the Editors and Friends of True West



### 14 BRANDED!

Lakota warrior Rain-in-the-Face fought proudly for his people's freedom and escaped death many times on and off the battlefield, but he couldn't outrun being branded a Custer killer.

—By James B. Mills

### 20 HERO OR GOAT?

The press declared Curly a hero until Gall called him out at the Battle of Little Bighorn's 10th reunion.

—By C. Lee Noyes

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Pint-Sized Percussion with a Punch

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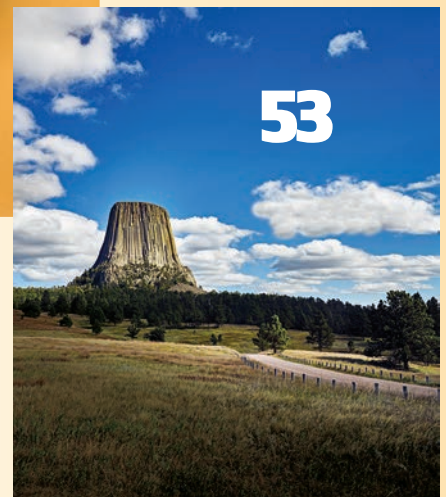
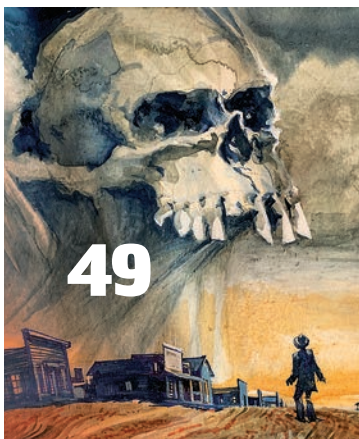
How a Kansas country physician's report on a deadly flu in 1918 went unnoticed and 50 to 100 million people died in its wake.

—By Bob Boze Bell

### 53 THE WEST AWAITS!

Plan now to discover the heart and heritage of the Old West on four road trips to take when the travel restrictions are lifted.

—By Stuart Rosebrook



Cover Design by Dan Harshberger

—COVER PHOTO COURTESY LITTLE BIGHORN BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL MONUMENT ARCHIVES, NPS.GOV—

### Old Vaquero Saying

"In a dark time, the eye begins to see."



### Quotes

"A man could shoot a squirrel out of a tree from a distance of 60 feet. But he couldn't vomit into a bucket or pee into a pot only two feet away. It was one of the great mysteries of life."

- Maggie Osborne

"Today they're making pictures that I wouldn't want Trigger to see."

- Roy Rogers

"Do what you can, with what you have, where you are."

- Theodore Roosevelt



Roy Rogers shown here surrounded by the Republic Pictures girls. That's Dale Evans, standing second from right.  
- REPUBLIC PICTURES -

"There is one rule that works in every calamity. Be it pestilence, war, or famine, the rich get richer and poor get poorer. The poor even help arrange it."

- Will Rogers

"The very least you can do in your life is figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope. Not admire it from a distance but live right in it, under its roof."

- Barbara Kingsolver

**"When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'"**

- Fred Rogers

**"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken."**

- Oscar Wilde

"Anything is much more believable, if it happens in the past."

- Richard Lester

"Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet."

- Aristotle

"If one morning I walked on top of the water across the Potomac River, the headline that afternoon would read: 'President Can't Swim.'"

- Lyndon B. Johnson

"Before anything else, preparation is the key to success."

- Alexander Graham Bell



"It's a great country—just don't get sick."

# The End of an Era

*Bob McCubbin was a friend of mine.*

We met for breakfast, fittingly, at the OK Cafe in Tombstone back in 1998. I was in town for a book-signing and Bob McCubbin drove over from El Paso to hang with me. Over bacon and eggs, Bob confessed to me he was retiring from El Paso Gas and he had some extra money and he wanted to buy a Mexican restaurant in El Paso, where he could hang some of his Old West collection. I laughed and said we could have a lot more fun and lose a lot more money by buying our favorite magazine, *True West*, which was rumored to be for sale. Long story short, we went with my idea and both my predictions came true. We had some fun, but we lost a ton of money in a very short time. Still, we survived, and we wouldn't have made it without Bob's contributions, both in money and the use of his spectacular, original photograph collection.

Bob and I had our differences, and there was a period when we were at extreme odds about the direction of the magazine. Bob finally sold out to my current partner, Ken Amorosano, and there was a long period when Bob and I avoided each other. If I have one regret about buying the magazine, it's that our friendship suffered a terrible blow.

So, imagine my surprise when I received this email from Bob McCubbin out of the blue:

"I think the magazine is better than it has ever been. That includes, as a charter subscriber in 1953, going all the way back to the first issue."

Bob was beloved in our Western history world, and we asked some of his friends to share their memories of him; they're on pages 8-9.



The Mapinator Gus Walker, me, and Bob McCubbin in the conference room of *True West* World Headquarters around 2005, scheming on our next *Classic Gunfight*. Hard to believe that both Gus and Bob are gone.

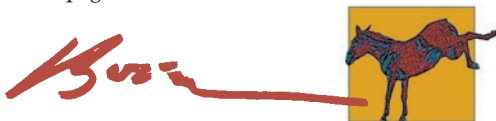
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## McCubbin's Billy

Back in the mid-1990s, I was with McCubbin in Tombstone when a certain store owner claimed he had a photo of Billy the Kid. The guy went on and on about the alleged provenance. I knew it was all BS and the guy was asking \$1,200 for the image, and much to my surprise, Bob up and bought it! When we got outside I asked him if he actually believed in the provenance claims and Bob said, "No, none of it, but I just like the picture because it's how I imagine the Kid would look." That was so Bob McCubbin.

### Inset:

My take on Billy the Kid's visage based on the photo Bob McCubbin bought in Tombstone. I gifted the original to Bob and it appears in my second edition of *Billy the Kid*.



For a behind-the-scenes look at running this magazine, check out BBB's daily blog at [TWMag.com](http://TWMag.com)

# A TRIBUTE: ROBERT G. McCUBBIN 1937-2020

PREMIER COLLECTOR IS REMEMBERED FOR HIS GENEROUS SPIRIT  
AND LOVE OF THE OLD WEST.

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Robert G. “Bob” McCubbin passed away from complications of dementia on April 9, 2020, in Santa Fe, New Mexico, at the age of 83.

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Bob McCubbin was a charter subscriber to *True West* magazine at age 12. He joined forces with Rick Baish and Bob Boze Bell in 1999 to buy the magazine.

— ALL IMAGES COURTESY TRUE WEST ARCHIVE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED —

## The Torch is Passed

I first met Bob McCubbin in Santa Fe in 2007. I'll never forget my wife, Lucinda, and I visiting his home and impressive collection of books and artifacts, and of course learning about his beloved teddy-bear Pomeranian. Afterwards, we had dinner at The Pink Adobe, where he insisted I try the Steak Dunigan, and then proceeded to tell us the legend of the building with its ghosts and rich history. The scariest part was handing over a six-figure check for his portion of *True West* ownership. Turns out it was the best investment of our lives, and I insisted on paying for dinner! A great man and a legend in his own right.

—Ken Amorosano  
Publisher, *True West*  
Cave Creek, Arizona

## A Gracious and Charming Man

Knowing Bob McCubbin has been a great experience. I first met him when he, Bob Bell and Rick Baisch were in the process of buying *True West*. McCubbin and Rick were lifelong friends, and Bob and Bob, friends for many years.

—Carole Compton Glenn  
Business Manager, *True West*  
Cave Creek, Arizona

## “Chick Bait”

Bob McCubbin was my friend over a period of nearly 30 years. Bob was not a big talker. He made himself understood without a lot of fancy speech. I asked him once why he didn't use words of more than two syllables. He answered that growing up in Oklahoma, he had no need to learn longer words. Or many words, for that matter.

When Bob found himself single again [after his divorce] at a relatively advanced age, the



After his second divorce, Bob became a devout bachelor and utilized “Bear,” his Pomeranian. He met many women with this dog and was truly sorry when the dog died.

first thing he did was buy himself the cutest little dog he could find. He took that dog with him everywhere. Bob named the dog “Bear” because it looked like a teddy bear. Privately, however, when I called it “Chick Bait,” he would just smile, and offer no objection.

—Rick Baish  
El Paso, Texas

## Memories of a Generous and Funny Man

One of my best memories of Bob came about two years ago when my wife and I drove to Santa Fe and picked him up to ride together to Bill Koch's ranch in Colorado. We laughed and cried and enjoyed every mile of the trip as we shared memories of old times and old friends. He knew then that his memory was failing and said to me, “Roy, I may forget all of my other friends, but I'll never forget you!”

—Roy B. Young  
Apache, Oklahoma

Bob McCubbin's home in Santa Fe was the “Playboy Mansion-West” for Wild West fanatics. From historical memorabilia to books which lined the walls, the place was electric with the intensities of the subjects.

—Thom Ross  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

He was one of the true giants in the Wild West history field. All of us owe a huge debt to Bob McCubbin.

—Jack DeMattos  
North Attleboro, Massachusetts

Bob McCubbin was one of the finest men I have ever known.

—Linda Wommack  
Contributing Editor, *True West*  
Littleton, Colorado

I consider myself fortunate that I was able to visit Bob McCubbin several times. We spent much of the evening talking about his books, photographs and the other objects which seemingly filled every bit of space in his home. I think all that was missing was Gen. Nathan Dudley's cannon from the Five Day Battle of Lincoln!

—Chuck Parsons  
Luling, Texas

Bob McCubbin was passionate about our regional history and an individual with enough charisma for 10 good men.

—Lynda A. Sánchez  
Contributing Editor, *True West*  
Lincoln, New Mexico

As long as Bob McCubbin was sharing his passion with others of the same passion, he was happy!

—Shelly Buffalo Calf  
Lincoln, New Mexico

Now it kind of comforts me to imagine that Bob has started a new collection. Not books or photographs, but the gunfighters themselves. First on his list, I figure, he'd go find Billy the Kid, just to see what he really looked like. And then he'd ask him the question that deviled him for years, "Billy, did you ever have your picture taken more than once?"

—Deborah Hofstedt  
Buffalo Bill Center of the West Trustee  
Newhall, California



Bob McCubbin—shown in his home library outside Santa Fe, New Mexico, in the 1990s—was very proud of his library and loved to show off his collection. One visitor was stunned when he mentioned Geronimo and asked if McCubbin had any books on the Apache. Bob casually walked to a shelf and pulled down a book and it was Geronimo's autobiography signed by GERONIMO!

The problem with asking what image or artifact Bob was most proud of is that it's like asking, "Which one of your children do you love most?" Bob did not discriminate. He seemed to think of his entire collection—books, photos, manuscripts, artifacts—as a single thing: "The Collection." From garters to guns, every piece was special and had a place in the whole. Even the Billy the Kid knife

(which he was definitely proud of) was part of his overall vision. When Bob identified something he wanted or needed, he dug deeper than anyone to make sure he acquired all the knowledge and accouterments to go with it. He had a great sense of humor about things he wished he might own (like the Billy the Kid Upham tintype), but he was never jealous of anyone else's collection. Always honest (occasionally to a fault) and generous, he was a historian who happened to be a collector, and he just wanted to share it all with the rest of us.

—Brian Lebel  
Old West Events  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

## The Tintype and the Knife

Bob and I became very good friends some years ago when he came to my home in Florida to get to know the big buyer of Western items. As part of his wonderful nature, he was extremely helpful to me. We spent a lot of time together, which was not enough. I learned a great deal from him. He also introduced me to a number of wonderful, new, very good friends. My life and my knowledge of the West have improved greatly because of him.

—Bill Koch  
Palm Beach, Florida



Bob McCubbin first saw the Billy the Kid knife in Tombstone during one of the first Renegades meeting at the Tombstone Boarding House. This photo was taken out in the front yard where many historians had gathered to see the find. Later, Bob would help advise Bill Koch on the purchase of the original Billy the Kid tintype photo. Koch would buy the only known photo of the outlaw for \$2.3 million at Brian Lebel's 22nd Annual Old West Show & Auction on June 25, 2011.



BY MARK BOARDMAN

# Initiation to Robbery

*Butch Cassidy's first bank job set the standard for future holdups.*

**J**une 24, 1889, was a big day in the life and career of Robert “Bob” LeRoy Parker. He and two—maybe three—accomplices dipped into big-time crime when they held up a bank in Telluride, Colorado. If the name Bob Parker doesn’t sound familiar, then let’s try his better-known alias: Butch Cassidy.

Telluride made sense as the target of Butch’s first stickup. He moved to the town in 1884, when he was just 18, employed to haul ore down from the nearby mountains. During the winter months, he turned to cowboying in Wyoming and Utah.

In 1887, Bob/Butch made a new friend: a fellow Utah Mormon named Willard Christianson, going by the name of Matt Warner. The two partnered in a horse-racing operation and made some significant cash—which they promptly blew in the saloons and other dens of iniquity. Within a few months, they teamed up with Warner’s brother-in-law, Tom McCarty. He had a long list of crimes to his name, including horse and cattle theft (and maybe a train holdup).

In the early spring of 1889, the trio was dead broke and looking for a quick score. At the end of March, they may have extorted \$21,000 from a Denver bank, although evidence linking them to the crime is anecdotal. But what is certain: the three turned their attention to Telluride that summer.

The job was a classic, a blueprint that The Wild Bunch would follow many times in the years to come.

Butch stayed in town for several weeks, casing the San Miguel Valley Bank. McCarty and Warner stayed some miles away, making other preparations (like making money bags for carrying the loot). All three of them were in Telluride on Saturday, June 22, 1889, hitting the bars and having a good time during the weekend.

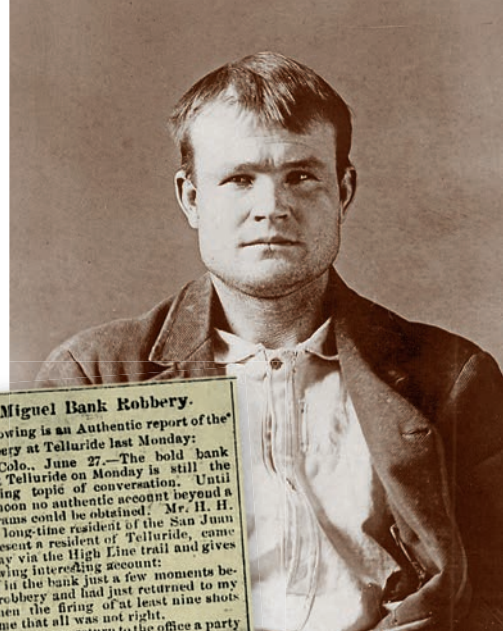
Witnesses said that four men rode into town that Monday. It’s not clear who the fourth man was. Speculation centered on the Sundance Kid or Bob Parker’s little brother, Dan—although McCarty and Warner later denied there was another participant.

One man entered the bank just after noon and threw down on the cashier, the only person in the bank. Two other robbers came in to collect the money; the fourth may have been holding the horses outside. The outlaws then headed slowly out of town, seeking to avoid notice—until they got near the Telluride limits, when they began yelling, firing their pistols and spurred their mounts. It’s believed they got just over \$20,000.

The boys headed southwest toward Cortez, about 70 miles away. A posse trailed them, but the outlaws had set up a relay of horses to speed their trip. After losing the lawmen, the fugitives spent about a week near Cortez, then took a circuitous route to Brown’s Park in northwest Colorado, a trip of more than 400 miles. There, another posse caught wind of them. Butch and company headed to Robbers Roost in Utah, a 300-mile ride.

Matt Warner later recounted that a small posse chased them into the Roost. The lawmen were out of water and in danger of dying of thirst. The outlaws took them captive—and made sure they got water before sending them on their way to civilization. According to Warner, he and Butch and McCarty made the local sheriff take his pants off, unsaddle his horse and then ride the animal back home. The boys got quite a laugh out of that.

Eventually, the boys ended up in Wyoming, around the Hole-In-The-Wall. Butch was likely involved in livestock theft



**San Miguel Bank Robbery.**  
The following is an authentic report of the Bank robbery at Telluride last Monday: Ouzay, Colo., June 27.—The bold bank robbery at Telluride on Monday is still the all-absorbing topic of conversation. Until this afternoon no authentic account beyond a few telegrams could be obtained: Mr. H. H. Corbin, a long-time resident of Telluride, came and at present a resident of Telluride, came over to-day via the High Line trail and gives the following interesting account:  
“I was in the bank just a few moments before the robbery and had just returned to my office when the firing of at least nine shots notified me that all was not right.  
“Just prior to my return to the office a party of four men dressed as cowboys rode into town and stopped at the brewery. From this point they mounted their horses and rode directly to the bank; all dismounted leaving their horses standing and started for the bank. Three of them entered the door, his hand resting on his hip, but in a manner to disclose his gun.



Butch Cassidy’s first bank robbery of the San Miguel Valley Bank on the northwest corner of Colorado Avenue and Pine in Telluride, Colorado, garnered a lengthy recounting on page two of the July 18, 1889, local *Delta Independent* newspaper. A year later, the original bank was destroyed in a fire and replaced in 1890 with Mahr Building (above), which has a plaque on the outside that commemorates the legendary robbery.

— BUTCH CASSIDY PHOTO COURTESY TRUE WEST ARCHIVES/ NEWS CLIPPING COURTESY NEWSPAPERS.COM/ MAHR BUILDING COURTESY GATES FRONTIERS FUND COLORADO COLLECTION WITHIN THE CAROL M. HIGHSMITH ARCHIVE, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS —

over the next few years. He also did 18 months in the state pen on a controversial charge of stealing a horse.

But he didn’t dive back into major crimes until August 13, 1896, when he joined with Elzy Lay, Bub Meeks and Harvey Logan in robbing the bank at Montpelier, Idaho. The Wild Bunch was born.



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Explore the mysteries of  
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BY JANA BOMMERSBACH

# “Our Father, Who Art....”

*In Dakota Territory, those were building words.*

**W**hat did people do in Dakota Territory in the late 19th century?

In the part that would become North Dakota—windswept, treeless, flat-as-a-pancake, cold-as-hell—they built churches. Small, intimate, full-on-Sunday churches.

The Lutherans mainly built with white clapboard; the Episcopalians with field stone, and the Catholics with brick—but all of them built and built, sometimes blocks from the last one.

They were so ever-present, it’s not clear if anyone ever realized just how many were built. Not until 1997, when one of the abandoned ones was burned down for the sake of training the local volunteer firefighters. Someone got a shot of the building completely engulfed in flames—the fiery end of a once-loved building.

“It was shocking,” remembers Barbara Lang, who’d become president of a new group called Preservation North Dakota. It prompted the group to launch a study of the churches. The next year, volunteers logged some 15,000 miles photographing prairie churches in all 53 counties of the state. It resulted in an exhibition called “Picture North Dakota Churches.”

North Dakota has never been a populous state, and at that moment, claimed 625,000 people. They were descendants of European immigrants, mainly Scandinavian and German, who’d started settling this inhospitable land in the mid-1800s. Imagine the surprise when Preservation North Dakota discovered those first immigrants built 2,200 churches. More per capita than any other state.

But there was plenty of bad news. While some were still in use, at least 400 churches were empty and threatened with destruction, and that number was growing yearly. “We



A pioneering group of Norwegian Lutherans intent on homesteading near Sims, Dakota Territory, founded the Evangelical Lutheran Church and parsonage in 1884. The historic prairie church, not fully completed until 1900, was saved in 2006 with 2,000 hours of volunteer labor and a grant to the Sims Historical Society from Preservation North Dakota—Preserving Prairie Places, which was matched by the church. The prairie church is the oldest in North Dakota west of the Missouri River.

— COURTESY NORTH DAKOTA TOURISM —

were horrified at the thought they’d be burned down, or left to rot and fall down on their own, which is a North Dakota way,” Lang recalls. Armed with the photos and those revelations came the Prairie Churches Project.

The first step was to get the National Trust for Historic Preservation to recognize the churches, which it did in 2001, putting them on the “Most Endangered Property” list—North Dakota’s first mention on a national wake-up call for preservation.

That opened the door for grants to help finance repairs and restorations needed to put the churches back into business—some for special religious services, some to be reused as libraries or museums or community centers. “The communities decided how they wanted to use the churches, and nobody wanted them to become bars,” Lang says.

“These churches were about the first thing settlers did—they were very proud of building a church,” she notes. “Most were put together by group labor.”

There are now state grants to help continue preservation efforts, and churches are regularly being saved.

Lang remembers how satisfying the effort was, but also what fun. “I made friends that I still have to this day. We get together every year and tour some old something or other that could be preserved. It’s something you never give up.”

And all we can say is “Amen” to that!



**Jana Bommersbach** has earned recognition as Arizona’s Journalist of the Year and won an Emmy and two Lifetime Achievement Awards. She cowrote the Emmy-winning *Outrageous Arizona* and has written three true crime books, a children’s book and the historical novel *Cattle Kate*.

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BY JAMES B. MILLS

# BRANDED!

Lakota warrior Rain-in-the-Face fought proudly for his people's freedom and escaped death many times on and off the battlefield, but he couldn't outrun being branded a Custer killer.

**B**y the early afternoon of June 25, 1876, Rain-in-the-Face had become a Hunkpapa band leader with more than 100 followers. The story of his having been taken prisoner and escaping the clutches of the 7th Cavalry and Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer, *Phehín Hánska* (Long Hair), on April 18, 1875, after four months of captivity at Fort Lincoln, Dakota Territory, had spread throughout the Lakota tribes. His bravery had paid off and as he had once looked to Sitting Bull for leadership and inspiration, younger warriors now looked to him for the same. A week earlier he had participated in the Battle of the Rosebud on June 17, in which Crazy Horse had led over 1,500 Lakota and Northern Cheyenne warriors to victory against Brig. Gen. George Crook and his 1,000 troopers, successfully halting Crook's advance. "I think he was more wise than brave," Rain-in-the-Face would later comment about Crook, whom the Lakota called Three Stars.

Rain-in-the-Face and his band were now encamped along the Little Bighorn River in southern Montana with around 10,000 Lakota, Cheyenne and Arapaho, including around 2,000 fighting men. The enormous camp stretched on for three miles. Sitting Bull had held a Sundance earlier in the month, in which he had a

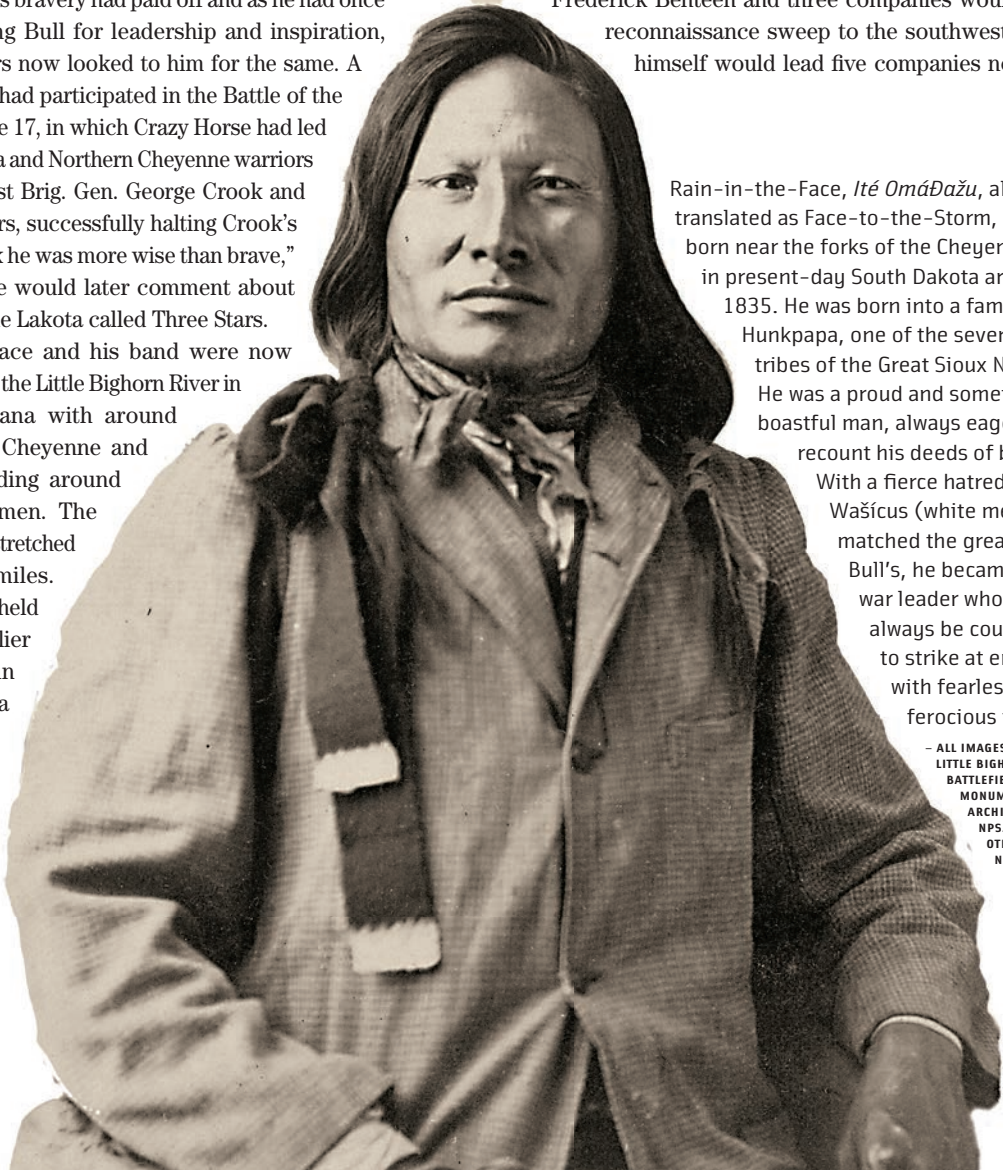
vision of white soldiers falling upside down into their village like grasshoppers. Rain-in-the-Face was eating a meal at a war council when the cry first went up of soldiers approaching the village. It was Custer and his 7th Cavalry, having disregarded warnings from his Crow scouts about the size of the Indian encampment.

Custer had sent Maj. Marcus Reno and three companies to attack the village from the southeast. Captain Frederick Benteen and three companies would lead a reconnaissance sweep to the southwest. Custer himself would lead five companies northwest

Rain-in-the-Face, *Ité OmáDažu*, also translated as Face-to-the-Storm, was born near the forks of the Cheyenne River in present-day South Dakota around 1835. He was born into a family of Hunkpapa, one of the seven Lakota tribes of the Great Sioux Nation. He was a proud and sometimes boastful man, always eager to recount his deeds of bravery.

With a fierce hatred of the *Wašícus* (white men) that matched the great Sitting Bull's, he became a war leader who could always be counted on to strike at enemies with fearless and ferocious intent.

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over the hills along the river and attack the camp from the northeast.

Rain-in-the-Face took some time getting back to his own lodge and ready himself for the approaching battle. By the time he emerged ready to fight, Major Reno and his three companies had been driven back across the river and up to what became known as Reno Hill, losing over 40 troopers along the way.

Word soon spread among the village that another group of Bluecoats (Custer and five companies) were approaching the camp from the bluffs across the river about two miles upstream. Hundreds of warriors rode back from Reno Hill and from the Indian encampment to meet this new threat. Rain-in-the-Face fell in with them and joined the fighting. He soon spotted a young Hunkpapa woman named Moving Robe among them. "Behold, there is among us a young woman! Let no young man hide behind her garment!" the war leader recalled shouting. "I knew that would make those young men brave."

Hundreds of warriors swarmed to meet Custer and his companies, who soon became overwhelmed and driven back up the bluffs. Gall, a Lakota battle leader, overcome with grief that two of his wives and three of his children were killed during the Reno attack, came screaming up the bluffs with a hatchet in hand like a madman. After helping to drive back Reno's three columns, Crazy Horse turned back and rode northwest along the Little Bighorn River before leading his warriors in a brilliant tactical sweep up the Deep Coulee and emerging behind Custer and his companies, cutting off any chance of escape.



War-whoops and Lakota cries of "*Hókahé!*" (Let's go!) and "*Nakénu la waí weló!*" (It is a good day to die!) carried through the dust clouds that rose over the battlefield. The cavalymen offered what resistance they could against the 2,000 warriors until a final charge led by Crazy Horse broke what was left of their skirmish lines. Some of the desperate soldiers bravely stood firm and continued fighting until they were cut down. Several committed suicide, shooting themselves in the head. The remaining cavalymen desperately fled for their lives in several directions, as the battle disintegrated into the equivalent of a buffalo hunt with the Indians riding down the fleeing troopers and dispatching them.

As early as July 12, 1876, newspapers, including the *Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune*, published "Agency Indian" accounts learned from "hostiles that took part in it, say 'Custer shot three Indians with his pistol and killed three others with his sabre when he fell, shot through the head by Rain-in-the-Face,' a chief whom Custer had forcibly arrested some time ago for murder." The proud Hunkpapa warrior lived the remaining three decades of his life with this legacy, one he did not clearly deny until near death in 1905.

Custer and his entire five companies, numbering 210 men, including his younger brother, Capt. Thomas W. Custer, had been decimated. The Lakota, Northern Cheyenne and Arapaho had won their greatest victory against the United States Army.

### A Legend False and Unclaimed

The story that Rain-in-the-Face had cut out and eaten Capt. Tom Custer's heart soon arose after the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Various testimony showed this was nothing more than a myth built up around a warrior so feared by his enemies. On June 28, three days after the battle, Lt. Edward S. Godfrey helped bury the mutilated bodies of his fellow cavalymen on the battlefield. Godfrey later recalled: "[Tom Custer's] body was lying face downward, all the scalp was removed, leaving only tufts of his fair hair on the nape of his neck. The skull was smashed in and a number of arrows had been shot into the back of the head and the body. We rolled the body over; the features where they had touched the ground were pressed out of shape and were somewhat decomposed. In turning the body, one arm which had been shot and broken, remained under his body; this was pulled out and on it we saw "T.W.C" and the goddess of liberty and flag. This, of course, completed our identification. His belly had been cut open and his entrails protruded. No examination was made to determine if his vitals had been removed."

Rain-in-the-Face spent his last years living on the Standing Rock Reservation in South Dakota. Before he died in his cabin on September 14, 1905, the Hunkpapa Sioux warrior told his final interviewer, Santee Sioux author Charles Eastman, that he had not killed—and did not know who had slain—his nemesis George Armstrong Custer.

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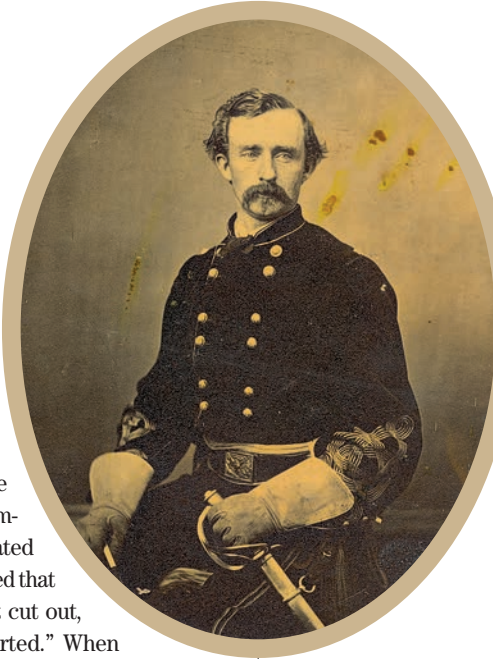
Captain Thomas Ward Custer's valiant career as a soldier—much of it in service to his famous older brother—ended within yards of George.

The scalping, skull smashing and cutting open of the abdomen were to be expected. The Lakotas commonly engaged in such treatment of an enemy's dead body. Had Tom Custer's heart been cut out, however, it would easily have been noticeable to Lt. Godfrey, who made no mention of any such mutilation to Tom's chest cavity and unlikely would have spared such particular detail had it occurred.

Captain Frederick Benteen, who observed Tom Custer's body later wrote, "The facts are



Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer was 36 years old when he was killed at Little Bighorn on June 25, 1876.



Elizabeth "Libbie" Bacon Custer, widowed at 24, defended her husband's career until her passing at the age of 90 in 1933.



that Tom Custer's heart was not cut out at all. I am able to substantiate this by affidavit." Dr. Henry R. Porter, the only surgeon to survive the battle also examined Tom's mutilated body and later stated that his "heart was not cut out, as has been reported." When

asked if Rain-in-the-Face had cut out the heart of a soldier, Kill Eagle, a chief of the Sihasapa (Blackfeet) Lakota tribe, who were camped with the Hunkpapa at the Little Bighorn, said, "Rain was with me, he did not do it."

A few months before his death, Rain-in-the-Face himself would declare: "Many lies have been told about me. Some say I killed the chief [George Custer], and others that I cut out the heart of his brother [Tom Custer], because he caused me to be imprisoned. After the battle we young men were chasing horses all over the prairie, while the old men and women plundered the bodies; if any mutilating was done, it was by the old men."

Tom Custer's heart was neither cut out nor eaten by Rain-in-the-Face, who probably never even approached his dead body. He was likely too busy tending to a wound he had suffered during the battle. Having ridden over a prostrate cavalryman, the wrongly presumed dead soldier had fired his revolver upwards into Rain-in-the-Face's right thigh, the bullet scraping off four inches of flesh in a diagonal line. Some said Rain-in-the-Face tended his wound by taking a razor from a dead soldier and performing a primitive form of surgery on himself.

Over the years following the battle, many Indians were credited with killing Lt. Col George A. Custer that fateful afternoon.

Rain-in-the-Face was not only among those credited, but at the top of the list. Attempting to determine exactly who killed George Custer is a futile endeavor, however the chance that it was Rain-in-the-Face is minimal.

Nearly 41 years of age at the time of the battle, Rain-in-the-Face was not expected to participate in the actual fighting. While he proudly laid claim to having killed a couple of soldiers on horseback with his war club and having taken their scalps, Rain-in-the-Face's vivid account of the battle indicates he was more an active observer that day than a prominent participant. The Sioux warrior probably never came close enough to the front lines of battle to have been the one who killed *Phehín HánskA*, later declaring, "no one knows who killed the Long-Haired Chief. Why, in that fight the excitement was so great that we could scarcely recognize our nearest friends! Everything was done like lightning."

Yet through a torrent of newspaper reports, Henry Longfellow's grandiose poem "The Revenge of Rain-in-the-Face" and Elizabeth Custer's inequitable writings, Rain-in-the-Face's reputation for having both cut out and devoured Tom Custer's heart and personally killed George Custer stood firm in many whites' minds for decades. After all, it made an absorbing tale

of frontier vengeance and savagery.

On May 21, 1905 the *Los Angeles Herald* printed an article about the melancholy old warrior which included several photographs depicting moments from his life. It also read, "the blood is unchanged and the fire in his eye kindles now when he speaks

of the wrongs of his people, and although seemingly friendly, he is, and always will be, an enemy of the white."

His blood may have remained unchanged, but Rain-in-the-Face had recently converted to Christianity. Having overseen his surrender some 25 years earlier, Eli L. Huggins would later ask, "Which Rain-in-the-Face is the more interesting animal, the savage of the Little Bighorn or the Presbyterian of Standing Rock?"

### A Warrior's Own Epitaph

By June 1905, Rain-in-the-Face had fallen ill. During the last few months of his life he lay mostly bedridden in his small log cabin, a faithful pet dog keeping him company.

It was during this time that Standing Rock Reservation Christian missionary Mary C. Collins would attempt to procure a confession from him regarding killing George A. Custer. He had long denied knowledge of it, telling her, "My niece, there was so much smoke and dust we do not know, we could not see." After imploring him to tell her the truth for the sake of history, he apparently rose up on his elbows and said, "Yes I killed him. I was so close to him that the powder from my gun blackened his face" and collapsed back into his pillow.

Historian Charles Eastman also visited the septuagenarian Sioux and recorded the old warrior's memories of his life, in which he firmly denied killing George A. Custer or having any knowledge of who did. Eastman was a well-educated Santee Sioux whom Rain-in-the-Face liked and trusted. Eastman's interview with the dying Hunkpapa would be published in his *Indian Heroes And Great Chieftains* in 1918.

Rain-in-the-Face was never a chieftain. Whether or not he was a hero is open for debate. He lacked the wisdom, temperance and conviction of Sitting Bull. He was without the statesmanship of Red Cloud or the selfless nobility and military genius of Crazy Horse. He was, however, a remarkably complex and controversial figure of his time, and his life was not without courage and achievement.

Rain-in-the-Face had fought bravely for his people in their defiance of white encroachment. He was a fierce warrior, but despite his reputation among the whites as a "fiend incarnate," as the widow Elizabeth Custer famously proclaimed him, he was no more ferocious a Lakota warrior than most. Through bravery, dedication and force of personality, he had ascended from warrior to war leader and eventually Hunkpapa band leader. He had then been humbled by subjugation, physical ailment and tribal insignificance. With his vanity demanding he remain relevant and capable of gross contradictions, he sometimes gloried in his unfounded notoriety as the



slayer of Custer and for an act of cannibalism he did not commit. Still, the old Lakota appears to have held little bitterness during his final days. His words to Charles Eastman two months before his death at Standing Rock Reservation on September 14, 1905, were those of a man finally at peace with himself and his approaching end.

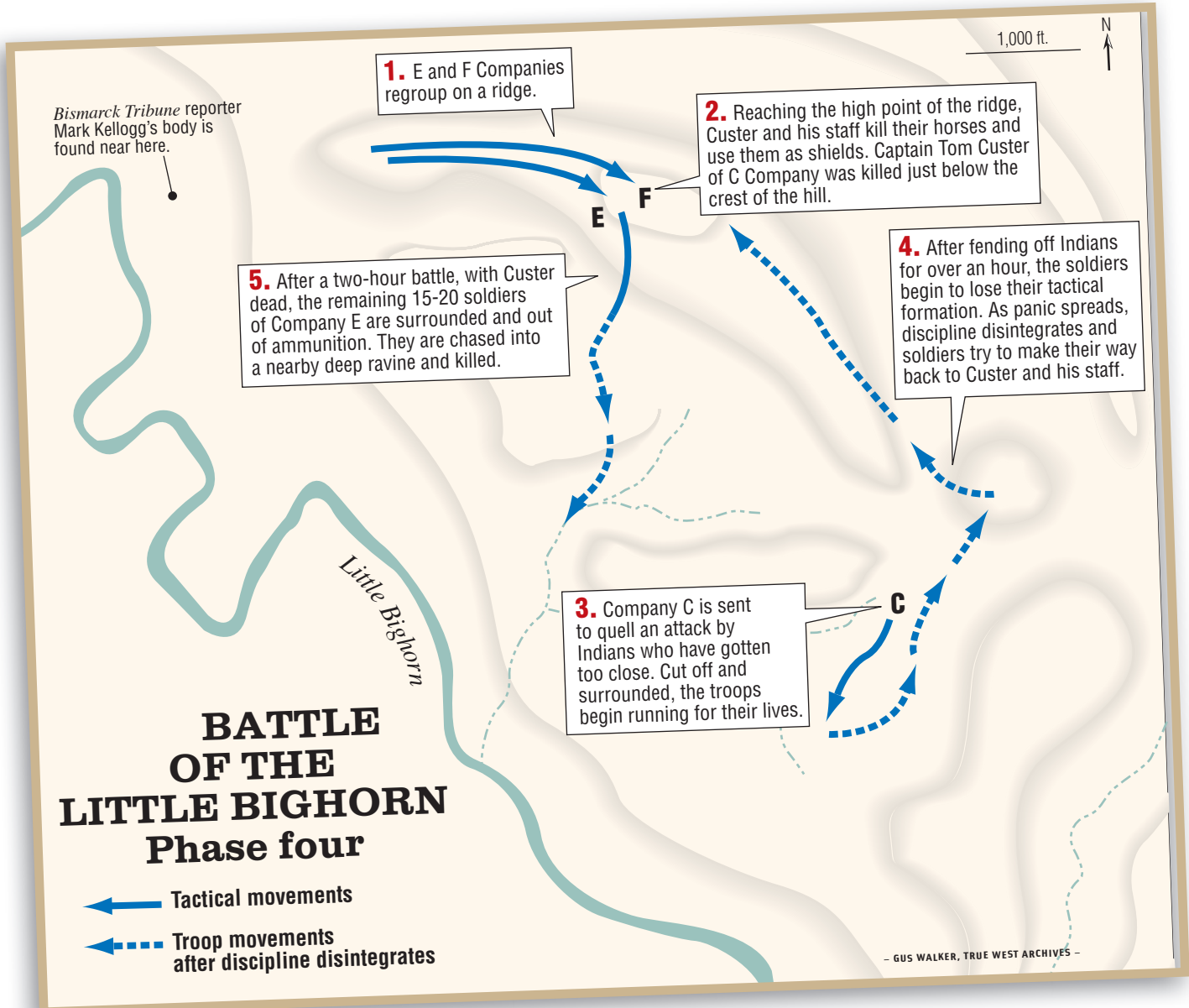
"I fought for my people and my country. Rain-in-the-Face was killed when he put down his weapons before the Great Father. His spirit was gone then; only his poor old body lived on, but now it is almost ready to lie down for the last time. *Ho Hechetu!* (It is well!)"

**James B. Mills** resides in Australia and has spent much of his life researching the Plains Indian Wars and the American West. (This article is affectionately dedicated to Leon Claire Metz, under whose tutelage it was partly written.)

Ten years after the Battle of Little Bighorn, Sitting Bull was living in peace on the Standing Rock Indian reservation near Fort Yates in the Dakota Territory. He did not attend the Little Bighorn reunion.

Who killed Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer at the Battle of Little Bighorn? The killed-in-action report of Lt. Edward Godfrey counted two bullet wounds to Custer's body, one on his left temple and one to his chest. Since Custer was right-handed, and most Custer historians do not believe it was in his nature to take his own life, he most likely was killed by one or more assailants while fighting in defense of his men.

— BOB BOZE BELL, TRUE WEST ARCHIVES —



BY C. LEE NOYES

# HERO OR GOAT?

The press declared Curly  
a hero until Gall called him out at the  
Battle of Little Bighorn's 10th reunion.

**THE** 1876 Battle of the Little Bighorn has played a major role in the legends that have shaped our nation's history. That controversial clash of cultures includes the stories of those present on that bloody Sunday in Montana Territory, first and foremost among them Lt. Colonel George Armstrong Custer. This, however, is a tale about a less-known participant—and what he did or did not witness at Custer's Last Stand.

Six Crow Indian scouts and the guide/interpreter "Mitch" Boyer were assigned to Custer and the 7th U.S. Cavalry because they knew the country well. They also had a stake in defeating their tribal enemies, the Lakota Sioux. On the morning of June 25, 1876, Boyer and the scouts spotted their target in the Little Bighorn Valley, as evidenced by the smoke of the Lakota campfires and evidence of an enormous horse herd. After Custer ordered Maj. Marcus A. Reno's battalion forward when the Indian encampment along the Little Bighorn appeared to be in flight, Boyer and four of the Crow scouts (Curly, Goes Ahead, Hairy Moccasin and White Man Runs Him) rode with the five cavalry companies under the colonel's immediate command toward what became known as Custer's battlefield. Boyer would die with Custer. The four scouts would survive the battle. [See "Custer, Crows and Curtis," *True West*, July 2019.]

At this point the scouts' exact movements are unclear, but we know that before Custer's last fight Curly (or Curley) separated from the other Crows, that none of them witnessed the entire battle (if they witnessed anything at all), and that all four left the Little Bighorn Valley that day. On June 27, Curly appeared at the steamboat *Far West* that was moored at the mouth of the river. Accounts differ as to the details provided by the dejected scout, but he gave the clear impression that the battle had been a disaster. The three other scouts had already communicated a similar message, when they encountered the Crow scouts with Col. John Gibbon's Montana Column the day before.

Curly soon became known as a witness if not "the only survivor" of Custer's last battle. "His story," the *Bismarck Weekly Tribune* reported on July 12, 1876, "though fully not understood...proved too true in all its details." Others inferred that he had participated in the fight, including Major Reno, who reported that "an Indian scout" with Custer related "what he saw of the battle." In 1881, Curly informed Lt. Charles F. Roe of the 2nd Cavalry that Custer had been repulsed attempting to ford the Little Bighorn to attack the village.

Sioux and Cheyenne warriors "rode right up to the command firing all the time, plenty of them. The troops fought on the ridge, firing into the Indians as they came across the river and up the slopes." Later, Curly

claimed, he had gone to a distant ridge but "saw there was no one moving, no one firing and all the troops appeared to be killed."

**"I did nothing wonderful.  
I was not in it."**



During the first 10 years after the Battle of Little Bighorn, Curly the Crow scout was considered a valued eyewitness and "lone survivor" of the battle until Lakota war chief Gall challenged Curly at the 10th reunion. Nonetheless, Curly would remain a well-known and regular participant in battlefield reunions until his passing on the Crow Reservation near the Little Bighorn River in 1923. He is interred in the Custer National Cemetery at Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.

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have known or recognized Curly in the confusion, dust and smoke of battle. The scout's reputation seemed intact. But doubts as to his story had been raised before Gall's comments appeared in the press.

Within days of the battle Gibbon's chief of scouts, Lt. James H. Bradley, interviewed Curly at length. Already credited as the battle's "sole survivor," the scout repeatedly denied that he had been in the fight. "He told us," interpreter Thomas Le Forge recalled, "that

The scout's status as a survivor (or witness) of Custer's Last Stand seemed unchallenged (at least to the public) until he and the Lakota war leader Gall attended the tenth anniversary observance of Little Bighorn at the battlefield in 1886. Gall claimed that Curly could not have known anything about Custer's last battle. "He ran away too soon in the fight," he asserted, as he turned his back on Curly.

Although historians have questioned Gall's description of Custer's route to the battlefield, he provided a credible, if not complete, account of the battle on that occasion. Be that as it may, he and other Lakota warriors could not

when the engagement opened he was behind, with the other Crows. He hurried away to a distance of about a mile...and looked for a brief time upon the conflict." The scout was adamant. "I did nothing wonderful. I was not there." Further doubts were raised when Curly returned to the battlefield in 1877 as Col. Michael V. Sheridan exhumed the bodies of Custer and other officers killed at the Little Bighorn for reburial. "Curly showed me...the place at which he deserted Custer," Sheridan reported, "and I soon became fully convinced that he had run away before the fight really began, and that the greater portion of his tale was untrustworthy."



Years later, the three other Crow scouts (who also had left Custer just before or soon after the fight began) denied his presence. “Curly had left us at Weir Peaks,” Hairy Moccasin, for one, claimed, “and cleared out of the country.” Goes Ahead alleged that Curly “disappeared” more than a mile even farther to the south, near where Reno’s command would be besieged. Attesting to his disappearance was Custer’s orderly, Pvt. John Burkman, detailed to the pack train that followed the command along Reno Creek to the Little Bighorn. He informed battle researcher Walter M. Camp that he saw Curly and several of the Arikara scouts heading east about two miles from the river, driving Sioux horses and “running away from the fight.” Other battle survivors confirmed this hurried departure of the scouts, who warned of “Heap Sioux!”

If Burkman was correct, Curly could not have been present at Custer’s last battle, based on the time and distance he had travelled to the pack train. In 1908, for example, he confessed to the Crow Indian agent that he “did not get into the fight, but saw it from a ridge north of the field.” However, he could not have seen anything from the ridges where he claimed to have “looked for a brief time upon the conflict,” as he told Bradley and Le Forge. “I have done sight tests from the area where he supposedly watched the battle,” Seasonal Battlefield Ranger Michael N. Donahue has informed us, “and you can see nothing, especially if there was any smoke or dust (which there was).”

For the remainder of their lives, the Crow scouts who served Lt. Col. George A. Custer’s 7th Cavalry for the final time at the Battle of Little Bighorn were prompted regularly to return to the battlefield at reunions and to recount their memories of their roles—and their final interactions with Custer—on the fateful June day in 1876. In about 1913, the year the first bridge was built across Little Bighorn River to provide greater access for visitors to the battlefield, a poignant photograph was taken showing (l.-r.) White Man Runs Him, Hairy Moccasin, Curly and Goes Ahead at Custer’s grave below the monument on Last Stand Hill.

For the sake of history this “sole survivor’s” tale must, therefore, be put to rest!

## POSTSCRIPT

Curly often related his alleged experiences at Little Bighorn. Between 1908 and 1913, for example, Walter M. Camp interviewed him on four known occasions (including at least one visit to the battlefield) assisted by Tom Le Forge and other interpreters. His accounts became not only more detailed but also more embellished. They included the claim that he had been present with Custer’s command after it retreated from the river and at Boyer’s urging escaped from Calhoun Hill at the southern end of the battlefield as they were being surrounded.

Curly also threw the other three Crow scouts under the bus. He told Camp that before Custer went into action,

Gall, one of the Lakota Sioux war chiefs at the Battle of Little Bighorn, regaled reporters with his version of the events of the Indians' victory at the 10th reunion of the 7th Cavalry's defeat on June 25, 1886.

A June 26, 1886 article in the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* said, "Early in the day the great Sioux Chief Gall went over the entire field and described in an intelligent and straightforward manner the exact place in which Custer's command was destroyed.

Curley [sic], the Crow scout, who was in reality the only survivor of all who marched into the valley of the Little Big Horn with Custer, was also present, but Gall turned his back on Curley, and said: 'He ran away too soon in the fight.'"

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they "turned tail and put back up the river following our trail along the bluffs." After they had left, he and Boyer "joined Custer... as he was advancing toward the village." No wonder bad blood toward Curly was apparent when Maj. Gen. Hugh Scott and Col. Tim McCoy interviewed the four scouts on-site in 1919. "We did not see Curly," White Man Runs Him argued, when "Boyer told us to go back." Their antipathy toward him was clear. "The three Crows against Curly hang together," Scott told battle survivor Luther R. Hare. "I believe Curley [sic] left long before he says he did." (The story of three scouts is a tale for another time.)

Yet Curly, by then, had told a more credible version of his Little Bighorn experience. As Custer reached the river, Curly said that Boyer informed the scouts he was joining Custer "and for the rest of us to go back to the pack outfit." Retracing his steps, he turned east up Reno Creek and "met the pack train. The outfit went on through and that was the last I saw of them." He followed a circuitous route to the mouth of the Little Bighorn, where he encountered the *Far West* two days later.



C. Lee Noyes resides in Morrisonville, New York, with his wife, Michele, whom he credits with reviving and sustaining his longtime passion for the 1876 Battle of the Little Bighorn.



#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

C. Lee Noyes is this month's guest "Build Your Western Library" columnist in "Western Books." Go to page 43 to read about his favorite books on the archaeological history of Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.

On June 25, 1886, photographer D.F. Barry chronicled the historic 10th reunion between the U.S. Army, allied Indian scouts and the tribes. The Army recreated certain battle events for the guests and participants of the reunion, placing Capt. Frank Baldwin and 16 men from Company K, 5th Infantry from Fort Custer, Montana Territory on an infantry skirmish line along Custer Ridge.



SKIRMISH LINE  
CUSTER BATTLE FIELD



CUSTER MONUMENT  
ON CUSTER BATTLEFIELD  
JUNE 26th 1886.

At the official 10th reunion of the Battle of Little Bighorn on June 25, 1886, survivors and their wives, (l.-r.) Cpl. Hall, Sgt. George Horn, Capt. Thomas McDougall, Mrs. McDougall, Maj. Frederick Benteen, Capt. Edward S. Godfrey, Mrs. Kate Benteen, Dr. Henry R. Porter, Mrs. Garity, Capt. Winfield Scott Edgerly, Trumpeter, 1st Cavalry George P. Penwell and the Crow scout White Swan, posed in front of the Custer Monument on Last Stand Hill. The granite obelisk was dedicated in 1881 and fenced in 1884 to protect it from vandals.



LITTLE BIG HORN RIVER,

WEST SIDE RENO CROSSING,  
CUSTER BATTLE FIELD.

JUNE 25th 1886.

**THE CUSTER BATTLE-FIELD.**

A Few of the Survivors Celebrate the Tenth Anniversary.

The Great Sioux Chief Gaul Narrates, in a straightforward Manner, the Details of the Bloody Battle.

Special Dispatch to the Globe-Democrat.

CUSTER BATTLE-FIELD, M. T., June 25.—The tenth anniversary of the dark and bloody tragedy, which will be a gloomy page in American history, was to-day appropriately celebrated by a few of the survivors of that dreadful June day. Early in the day the great Sioux Chief, Gaul, went over the entire field and described in an intelligent and straightforward manner the exact place in which Custer's command was destroyed. Curley, the Crow scout, who was in reality the only survivor of all who marched into the valley of the Little Big Horn with Custer, was also present, but Gaul turned his back on Curley and said: "He ran away too soon in the fight." Gaul is a powerful, fine-looking specimen of the red

At the 10th reunion of the Battle of Little Bighorn, a group of horsemen posed for D.F. Barry on the west bank of the Little Bighorn River at Reno's Retreat Crossing. Maj. Marcus Reno's Companies A, G and M were ordered by Custer to cross the Little Bighorn River in the early afternoon and attack the Indian village. Reno's troopers were quickly repulsed by an overwhelming Indian counterattack and were forced to retreat back across to the east side of the river.

TRUE WEST EXCLUSIVE

# CLASSIC GUNFIGHTS

## WILD BILL SHOT DOWN

JAMES BUTLER HICKOK  
VS  
JACK MCCALL

HE HAD NO CHANCE

"I FEEL MY DAYS ARE  
NUMBERED."



Jack McCall manages to dispatch Wild Bill using a pistol that misfires twice.

- ILLUSTRATIONS BY BOB BOZE BELL -

BY BOB BOZE BELL

Maps & Graphics by Gus Walker

AUGUST 2, 1876

**W**ild Bill Hickok walks from his camp on the edge of Deadwood to Lewis, Nuttall and Mann's No. 10 Saloon.

Entering around noon, he encounters about a half-dozen men. Three men are playing draw poker. Wild Bill recognizes Missouri River steamboat captain William R. Massie and Charlie Henry Rich, a card dealer Wild Bill knows from his days in Cheyenne, Wyoming Territory. Wild Bill joins their game.

Wild Bill sits in the only available seat, near the rear entrance of the saloon, facing the front door. He usually sits along the west wall, but Rich is occupying that seat. Wild Bill prefers that seat's view of the entire room, including good views of the front and back doors, and asks Rich for his "regular" seat, but the gambler refuses to move.

Wild Bill, uncomfortable with the fact that his back is exposed to the open bar and rear door, once again asks Rich to trade places. This time,

the other players chide Wild Bill, telling him he has nothing to worry about this early in the day. Wild Bill takes the empty seat.

The four men have been playing draw poker for almost three hours when Jack McCall (also known as Bill Sutherland) walks through the front door, heads over to the bar, pauses, moves down the bar and stops momentarily at the scales sitting on the end of the bar.

Wild Bill throws down his hand in disgust and says, "The old duffer, he broke me on that hand."

McCall steps forward, takes out a pistol and points it at the back of Wild Bill's head, pulling the trigger at the same instant.

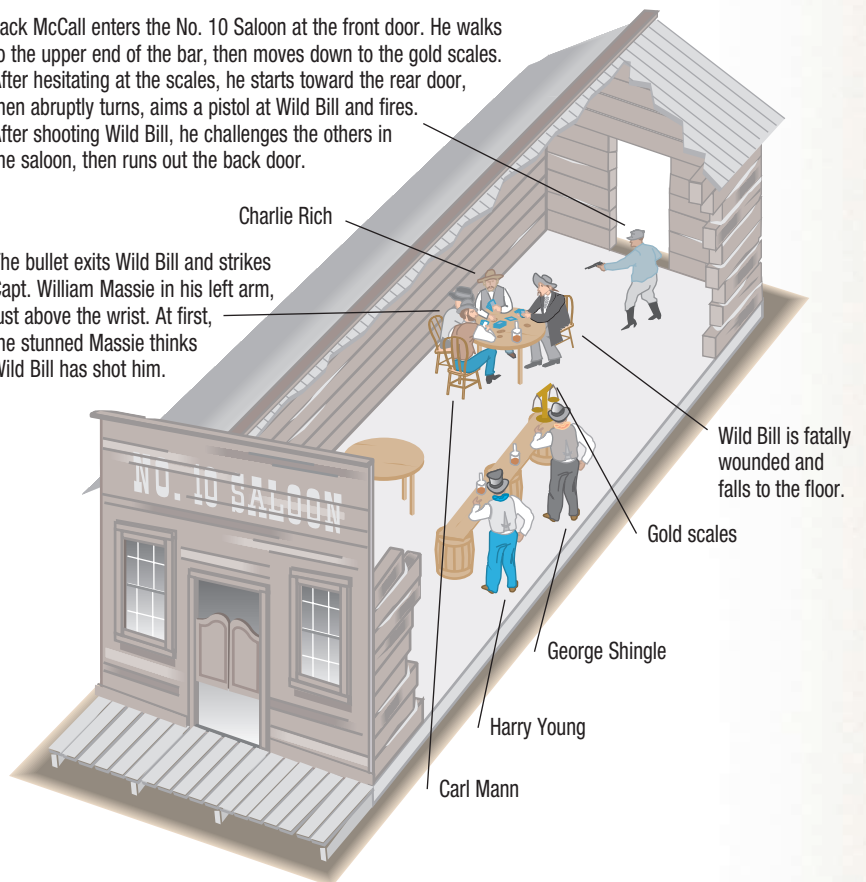
The bullet exits Wild Bill's right cheek near the bottom of his nose. His head moves slightly forward, and he is still for a moment. Then he falls sideways off his stool onto the floor. He dies instantly.



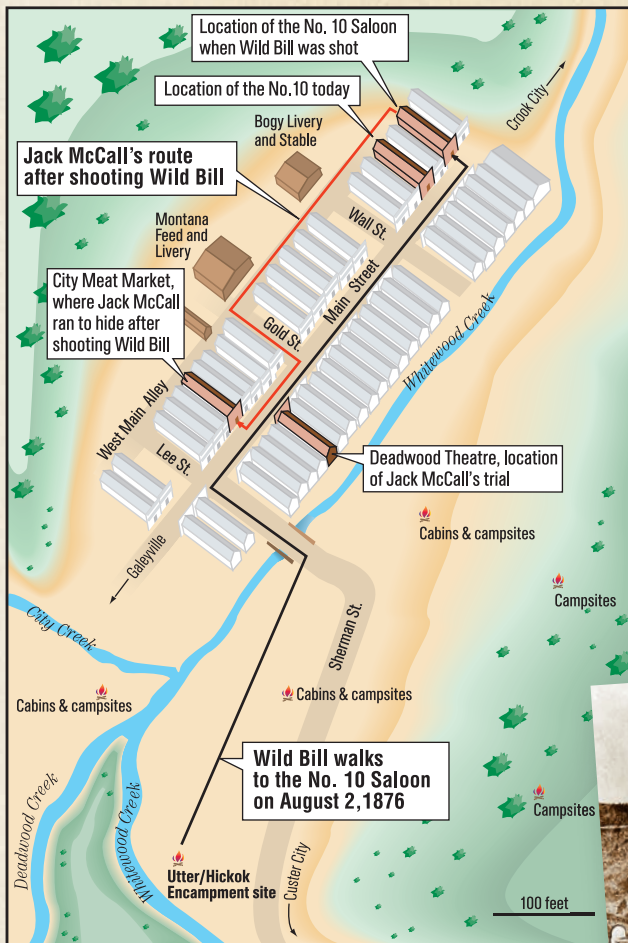
### No. 10 Saloon Deadwood City Dakota Territory August 2, 1876, 3 p.m.

Jack McCall enters the No. 10 Saloon at the front door. He walks to the upper end of the bar, then moves down to the gold scales. After hesitating at the scales, he starts toward the rear door, then abruptly turns, aims a pistol at Wild Bill and fires. After shooting Wild Bill, he challenges the others in the saloon, then runs out the back door.

The bullet exits Wild Bill and strikes Capt. William Massie in his left arm, just above the wrist. At first, the stunned Massie thinks Wild Bill has shot him.



# DEADWOOD



## THE NO. 10 SALOON

The original No. 10 Saloon apparently ceases to exist after the spring of 1877. An auction and consignment furniture store reportedly occupies the site sometime around 1878, when Billy Nuttall picks up the lease for the Bella Union Variety Theatre next door.



## A Premonition of Death

"I feel that my days are numbered; my sun is sinking fast; I know I shall be killed here, something tells me I shall never leave these hills alive; somebody is going to kill me. But I don't know who it is or why he is going to do it."

Wild Bill says these words to a friend, a week before his death. *The Cheyenne Daily Leader* reports the account weeks later, on August 26, 1876.

Wild Bill admitted his fears to his wife, Agnes, in a letter postmarked August 1, the day before he is killed: "Agnes Darling, If such should be we never meet again, while firing my last shot, I will gently breathe the name of my wife—Agnes—and with wishes even for my enemies I will make the plunge and try to swim to the other shore."

The Reverend W.F. Warren surely must have misread the marriage ceremony; so much for not "meaning it."



## Aftermath: Odds & Ends

The death bullet fired by Jack McCall, passes through Wild Bill and hits William R. Massie in his left arm, above the wrist. The riverboat pilot thinks Hickok, perhaps enraged over losing, has shot him. Backing towards the rear door, McCall screams at everyone, "Come on ye sons-a-bitches!" He cocks his pistol and fires, but the gun fails to shoot. He then tries to fire again at the bartender who has come out from behind the bar to help Wild Bill, but the gun misfires again. McCall flees.

Captured and tried the next day, on August 3, 1876, in the new Deadwood Theatre, McCall testifies Wild Bill shot his brother in Kansas two years earlier, and that the killing is an act of vengeance. Although completely false, the jury of miners finds him not guilty.

On August 3rd, Colorado Charlie Utter holds a funeral service for Wild Bill and pays for a burial plot and marker (left).

McCall leaves town for Laramie City, Wyoming Territory, where he brags about the killing. Colonel George Mays obtains a federal arrest warrant and takes McCall into custody on August 29. Tried in federal court in December 1876, McCall admits he lied about Wild Bill killing his brother. He is found guilty and hanged on March 1, 1877. His body is buried with the hangman's noose still around his neck in an unmarked grave in the local Catholic cemetery.

**Recommended:** *The Illustrated Life & Times of Wild Bill Hickok* by Bob Boze Bell, 2017, published by Two Roads West



# CLASSIC TRUE WEST

FROM THE TRUE WEST ARCHIVES

**Editor's Note:** In honor of all the brave men and women in emergency and medical services serving our nation and around the world during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, we are re-publishing Dr. Jim Kornberg's September 2008 classic "The Great Race of Mercy" that recounts how teams of mushers and sled dogs raced across Alaska to save the children of Nome from a diphtheria epidemic in 1925. If you'd like to read more of Dr. Jim Kornberg's articles on medicine in the West, please go to [TrueWestMagazine.com](http://TrueWestMagazine.com) and subscribe for full access to 66 years' worth of exciting issues of *True West*.

## The Great Race of Mercy

TRACKING DIPHTHERIA FROM NOME, ALASKA, TO TODAY.  
BY DR. JIM KORNBERG

The place was Nome, Alaska. Dr. Curtis Welch waited anxiously for his prayers to be answered in the early morning hours of February 2, 1925.

Outside, it was 35 degrees below zero Fahrenheit. The good doctor was battling an outbreak of the dreaded disease diphtheria and was awaiting the delivery of a fresh supply of diphtheria antitoxin.

In what became known as the "Great Race of Mercy," the heroic musher Gunnar Kaasen drove his team of huskies, led by the immortal dog Balto, to answer the doctor's prayers at 5:30 a.m., after traveling the last leg of the 674-mile trip from Anchorage. Kaasen and his fellow mushers had covered this enormous distance through ice and snow in less than five days. Today, this feat of mercy and grit is celebrated every March by the running of the famous Iditarod sled dog race from Anchorage to Nome.

### All Choked Up

Dr. Welch had seen this devastating disease choke the airways of his young patients, causing death by asphyxiation. In 1925, Dr. Welch was fortunate to have received the antitoxin that was able to break the epidemic by preventing the spread of the diphtheria infection. Before the 1890s, on the other hand, the treatment options open to the frontier physician had been quite limited.



Simple but graphic illustration of how 300,000 units of diphtheria antitoxin was rushed into Nome from Anchorage over frozen wastelands of Alaska. The serum was sent by train from Anchorage to Nenana, which does not show on the map, a distance of approximately 450 miles, and from Nenana on into Nome, 650 miles, by sleds. Siberian huskies, spurred on by Alaska's crack dog derby runners, races over the frozen trails day and night in relays, landing the antitoxin in the little town at 5:30 o'clock Monday morning. The map shows the trail.

FROM "THE BIRMINGHAM NEWS," FEBRUARY 3, 1925, PAGE ONE

Diphtheria devastated many families in the Old West, including that of the gunfighter and acquaintance of Wyatt Earp, "Texas Jack" Vermillion, who lost his wife and two children in Missouri circa 1870.

Diphtheria is a disease caused by a toxin-producing bacterium that primarily infects the mucous membranes of the back of the throat (pharynx), the tonsils and the nose. The bacterial toxin causes the formation of an

inflammatory grayish white membrane that extends over the soft structures in the throat, causing obstruction of the airway, especially in young children. It is spread from person to person by contact with the respiratory droplets or soiled clothing of an infected individual, or even contaminated raw milk. The shedding of infectious droplets can last from two to four weeks; but the rare chronic carrier of the disease can infect others for six months or more.



When diphtheria struck an old frontier town, 5-10 percent of infected victims perished; but the percentage of fatalities was much higher in young children. Victims usually developed fatigue, high fever and sore throat, with difficulty swallowing. If neck swelling ensued, the prognosis was usually poor. Diphtheria can also cause a secondary infection of the skin at the site of preexisting skin disease. The bacterium even attacks the kidneys, the heart and the nervous system.

### The "You Tubed" Treatment

The only effective treatment in the Old West was to quarantine infected victims and to attempt the best possible management of the patient's airway by keeping it open by any means, including tracheotomy (surgical opening of the windpipe through the front of the neck). Older medical textbooks recommended that the patient have his feet placed in warm water and that he breathe in the warm vapors of water, mixed with vinegar—even bleeding was recommended.

In the 1880s, the U.S. physician Dr. Joseph O'Dwyer developed tubes that could be inserted into the throat of an infected person to maintain

the airway until the disease subsided or the membrane was surgically reduced. This latter treatment was controversial, since it could result in uncontrollable bleeding.

As late as 1892, Dr. William Osler recommended the application of various agents directly to the bacterial membrane, including carbolic acid, a 50 percent solution of hydrogen peroxide and lactic acid mixed with limewater and trypsin.

In the 1890s, an animal-based antitoxin was developed by the German physician Emil von Behring, for which he was awarded the first Nobel prize in Medicine in 1901.

Today, we protect children and adults with vaccination, usually administered with protection against tetanus and, sometimes, pertussis (Whooping Cough), in the form of the DTP series of shots. Antibiotics, including

Village dogs were almost gone in Alaska by the mid-1960s, but Dorothy Page and Joe Redington, Sr., revived the sport of mushing by recommending a race be part of the 1967 Alaska Centennial celebration. That led to the first Iditarod Race, held in 1973. The great sled dog race goes on to this day.

penicillin and erythromycin, can also treat diphtheria and can prevent its complications.

Diphtheria is just one of several devastating epidemics that threatened the pioneers of the Old West. I will "treat" you to most of them in subsequent Frontier Doc columns.



**Dr. Jim Kornberg** holds an MD and an ScD. He is an environmental medicine physician and an engineer. He lives with his wife, Sally, on a ranch in the mountains of southwestern Colorado.



After Gunnar Kaasen's sled-dog team, led by Balto, saved the children of Nome with the desperately needed diphtheria vaccine, the musher and his brave dog were touted and toured as international heroes.

- TRUE WEST ARCHIVES -

## TRUE WEST ARCHIVES

For the first time ever, every issue of *True West* magazine is now online, including Dr. Jim Kornberg's original in the September 2008 issue. To learn more about how you can read all of Dr. Kornberg's columns on medicine in the West and subscribe to *True West* Archives, go to [TrueWestMagazine.com](http://TrueWestMagazine.com).

***Our past awaits you!***

BY KEN AMOROSANO

# THE PLIGHT OF THE POCKET PISTOL

PINT-SIZED PERCUSSION WITH A PUNCH

**AS** the shadowy figure entered the darkness of the anteroom, he could hear actor Harry Hawk reciting his soliloquy on the theatrical stage below. The man in black opened the door to the presidential box and found himself standing behind its four unsuspecting occupants. Raising the single-shot pistol to his victim's head, he pulled the trigger at point-blank range. In the ensuing chaos and brimming smoke from the black powder explosion, the perpetrator leapt from the balcony onto the stage so setting into motion one of the most bold and infamous assassinations in American history.

The single shot culprit, a .44 caliber pocket pistol known as the Deringer. A pistol so small as to be easily concealed alongside the nine-inch dagger John Wilkes Booth used to fight his way out of the box and onto the stage, leaving behind a dying Abraham Lincoln as well as the



Manufactured by Henry Deringer, this .44 caliber is about 6 inches long with a 2 1/2 inch barrel and only weighs 8 ounces. John Wilkes Booth's weapon was found on the floor of the State Box in Ford's Theatre after Booth (inset) shot and killed President Abraham Lincoln. The original is located today in the basement museum of Ford's Theatre.

— PHOTOS COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS —

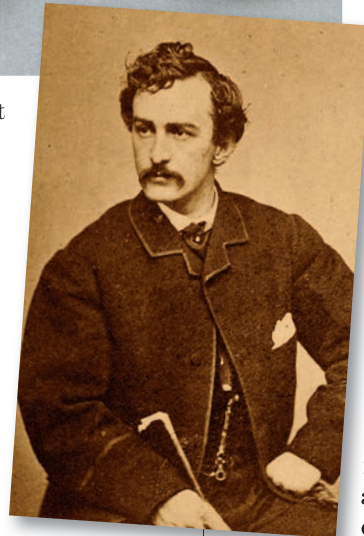
iconic pocket pistol that would forever change the course of history.

Pocket pistols have a storied history. Primarily used as a concealed deterrent for protection in an age when most firearms of the pistol type were large and bulky, the pocket pistol evolved based on stealth and etched its way into American carnage in a multitude of ways.

The most iconic pocket pistol was the Philadelphia Deringer. Invented in 1852 by gunsmith Henry Deringer, this gun was a .41-caliber muzzle-loading percussion pistol that packed a punch.

Deringer never sought to patent his invention, which allowed the growing firearms industry to capitalize on his success. While some manufacturers simply stole his design, others intentionally misspelled the description of the concealable handgun as "derringers" to sidestep trademark infringement.

Prominent manufacturers like Colt and Remington produced their own derringer



pistols in a range of calibers with the most successful being Remington's double-barreled derringer, also known as the Model 95. It featured a two-shot, over and under design and an estimated 150,000 were produced between 1866

and 1935.

Although open carry was common practice on the range and in towns into the late 1800s, concealed carry was also popular, and the demand and desire for a capable, yet easy to hide, handgun created a burgeoning market for the creative gunsmiths of the day.

Many pocket pistols were simply smaller versions of standard revolvers that folks could carry in their pockets. Excellent examples of these firearms include a variety manufactured by Colt. The 1848 Baby Dragoon, 1849 Colt Pocket, and Wells Fargo Pocket brought big power into a smaller package, as did Colt's 1860 Army Snub Nose and 1862 Police Pocket pistols.



Remington's double-barreled derringer, also known as the Model 95, featured a two-shot, over and under design. An estimated 150,000 were produced between 1866 and 1935.



Bond Arms Roughneck,  
\$269, [BondArms.com](http://BondArms.com)



Smith & Wesson's 1878 Model 1 1/2, was a favorite of gamblers, detectives, and ladies of the evening.

The design of this Chicago Protector Palm Pistol was based on one patented by Jacques E. Turbiaux of Paris. The Protector was the size of a pocket watch and was engaged and fired by squeezing it with your hand.



Another popular pocket-sized handgun was Smith & Wesson's 1878 Model 1 1/2, a favorite of gamblers, detectives, and ladies of the evening. This five-shot revolver was the first small-bore Smith & Wesson to use the star-type cylinder ejector, and its rebounding hammer design all but guaranteed safe carrying when the cylinder was fully loaded.

Like the Smith & Wesson Model 1 1/2, Remington's 1863 Pocket revolver was a cap and ball beauty with no trigger guard, a sleek profile, and a reputation of keeping card players and other gambling types honest.

Then there is the pepperbox. With a history that dates back to the 1500s, the pepperbox made its resurgence in the late 1800s becoming a favorite concealed-carry gun of lawmen, gamblers and those in need of a reliable backup.

Although easily concealed with multiple shots at the ready, the pepperbox did have its drawbacks, including the fact that it wasn't very accurate. Mark Twain once said, "The safest place to be when



facing a Pepperbox-wielding antagonist was standing directly in front of him."

Perhaps some of the most unusual pocket pistols ever made were the Chicago Protector Palm Pistols. The design of these pistols was based on one patented by Jacques E. Turbiaux of Paris. Turbiaux described his pistol as a "revolver which may be held in the hand with no part exposed except the barrel." The Protector was the size of a pocket



Remington's 1863 Pocket revolver was a cap and ball beauty with no trigger guard, a sleek profile, and a reputation of keeping card players and other gambling types honest.

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watch and was engaged and fired by squeezing it with your hand.

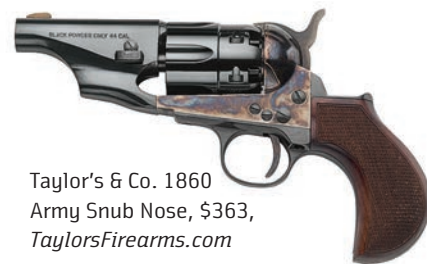
Today, you can get your hands on replicas of most of these iconic pocket pistols from modern-day manufacturers Cimarron Firearms, Taylor's & Co., EMF Company, Bond Arms, Ruger and Colt, as exhibited on these pages.

Pick your poison, then relish in the history of these pocket-sized powder kegs that continue to enthrall and entice gun aficionados of the 21st century.



Wells Fargo Detective James Hume, famed for tracking down California bandit Black Bart in 1883, carried this cut-off 1860 Colt .44 percussion revolver as a hideout gun.

- COURTESY WELLS FARGO BANK COLLECTION -



Taylor's & Co. 1860  
 Army Snub Nose, \$363,  
 TaylorsFirearms.com



Taylor's & Co. 1863  
 1863 Pocket Remington  
 Nickel Plated, \$364,  
 TaylorsFirearms.com



Uberti 1849 Colt Pocket, \$389, [Uberti-USA.com](http://Uberti-USA.com)



EMF Company 1851 Navy "Captain Schaeffer" .36 4" U1, \$485, [EMF-Company.com](http://EMF-Company.com)

Vintage Sharps & Hankins Civil War-era Four Shot Pepperbox Pistol. Mark Twain once said, "The safest place to be when facing a Pepperbox-wielding antagonist was standing directly in front of him."



EMF Company/Pietta's Model 1851 Navy "Yank" Pepperbox .36-Cal, \$210, [EMF-Company.com](http://EMF-Company.com)



Cimarron 1862 Police Pocket, \$402.14, [Cimarron-Firearms.com](http://Cimarron-Firearms.com)

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BY CANDY MOULTON

# On the Bison Trail

*The heritage traveler can discover the history and natural wonder of the great buffalo herds from Texas to Montana.*



Artist George Catlin's remarkable tours of Western North America in the 1830s and 1840s resulted in an important portfolio of Great Plains tribal cultural history, including a series of paintings of bison hunts, including his 1832 *Buffalo Hunt, Surround*.

— COURTESY NYPL DIGITAL COLLECTIONS —

**T**he great wild bison herds that once ranged from Canada to Texas had a significant impact on the people and landscape of the West. Their annual migrations churned the soil as they took advantage of natural grasslands. The native people of the region followed these herds as a source of food. They utilized every part of the animals, often referred to as buffalos, by processing hides for lodges, clothing and moccasins. They turned bison bones into tools and used the animals' sinew to make thread or binding for attaching tips to arrows to use in hunting or for protection.

When the Northern Boundary Survey worked its way from the Great Lakes to the Rocky Mountains from 1872 to 1874, bison were often encountered. In his report of February 14, 1877, Maj. William Twining, who led the survey team, wrote of the area known as Three Buttes or the Sweet Grass Hills of present Montana, saying they "are the center of the feeding-ground of the great northern herd of buffaloes." He added, "This herd, which ranges from the Missouri River north to the Saskatchewan, made its appearance, going south, about the last of August. The number of animals is beyond all estimation. Looking at the front of the

herd from an elevation of 1,800 feet above the plains, I was unable to see the end in either direction."

Traveling on the fringes of the immense herd were "Sioux, Assiniboines, Gros Ventres of the prairie, and Blackfeet," Twining wrote.

Valentine T. McGillicuddy, who worked on the Northern Boundary Survey, later recalled, "Buffalo dotted the plains as far as the eye could see. Often we had to suspend astronomical observations at our stations located at 20-mile intervals because the vibrations from the drumming hoofs of herds nearby shook the instruments."

## Historic Herds of Montana

Fort Benton, Montana, sat in the heart of the northern range of the great bison herds and was an important trading location in the Upper Missouri River country. This site, with its preserved original walls and recreated trading rooms, is a good place to start a journey on the trail of the bison. At the Museum of the Northern Great Plains, see the Hornaday Smithsonian buffalo exhibit, which is a group of six animals, from an impressive bull to a small calf. William T. Hornaday collected the animals in 1886 for the National Museum in Washington, D.C. They came from the last wild herd found between the Yellowstone and Missouri rivers. These six mounts were placed on exhibition in 1887 at the Smithsonian, where the big bull became a model for several lasting symbols, including the seal for the Department of the Interior and the badge for the National Park Service. This grouping of bison was returned to Montana in 1955 and placed in storage until the animal mounts were restored and placed on display in Fort Benton.

Nearly 30 years ago, college professors Frank and Deborah Popper proposed Buffalo Commons—a measure that would have the government buying large tracks of land across the Great Plains as a way to restore the prairie animals to their natural habitat. Their premise was based partly on the fact that the population of the area was already sparse and declining. They imagined a return to a landscape where bison and other animals could freely roam as they had done more than a century earlier.

Their proposal drew a firestorm of criticism and many said it would never happen. But in the intervening decades there have been changes in land management in the region. One of them is the establishment of the American Prairie Reserve, based in Montana, which has been buying ranch land from willing sellers and putting together a land mass that will support large numbers of bison and provide habitat for other species as well.

## Yellowstone and the Black Hills

The bison in the Hornaday exhibit at Fort Benton came from the wild herd in Yellowstone National Park back in the 1870s, and that herd is still intact. Traveling through the Hayden Valley in the central part of Yellowstone, you will almost always see small and large groups of bison. If your



Montana's Historic Old Fort Benton is now a living history center of the fur and hide trade of the Upper Missouri River Valley. Constructed between 1846 and 1860, Fort Benton was one of the great trading posts on the Upper Missouri River. One bastion of the fort, built in adobe, similar to Fort Laramie, remains, while the remainder, including the trade store, has been reconstructed on the site along the north bank of the Missouri River.

— COURTESY MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT —

timing is just right, you might see them fording the Yellowstone River.

The Lamar Valley in the northern area of the park—between the Tower-Roosevelt Junction and Cooke City, Montana—is another excellent place to see wild bison herds, and here you have the added opportunity to watch interaction between the bison and the Yellowstone wolf packs, who were reintroduced in this area of the park in 1995 and have significantly increased their range since then.



Prior to his service as a surgeon and topographer under General George Crook in the Black Hills during the Great Sioux War, Dr. Valentine T. McGillicuddy witnessed the last of the vast Northern Plains bison herds as a member of the Northern Boundary Survey of 1871-1874.

— COURTESY NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION, NO. 533168 —

To experience a buffalo roundup, travel to Custer State Park, near Keystone, South Dakota, in late September when an annual gathering takes place. You can see the buffalo in this herd throughout the park at other times of the year.

## The Southern Plains

When bison populated the Great Plains in the 18th and 19th centuries, they roamed from the Dakotas to Texas. You can cross the landscape they utilized as you travel to Dodge City, Kansas. This town grew to prominence in large part because of frontier trade, a good portion of it tied to the buffalo hunters who harvested thousands of animals primarily for their hides.

Those who hunted on the bison ranges in Texas built their own commercial center at Fort Griffin. Learn about that story at Fort Griffin State Park, near Albany, Texas. Men like the Mooar Brothers and others followed the herds, often shooting dozens or a hundred in a single killing opportunity. These massive animals, who had faced varied climates, the need for annual migrations of hundreds of miles, and subsistence-hunting by Indians for generations, could not avoid the bullets fired from a Sharps Big Fifty. By the late 1800s, the great herds had been nearly decimated.

A few wild bison, captured and raised by cattleman Charlie Goodnight and others in Yellowstone National Park, survived and in the ensuing decades repopulated. There are



The storied Great Plains cultural and natural history of the American bison can be experienced in person by camping in an American Prairie Reserve yurt and on a scheduled, paid tour of nearby bison herds, including the splendid one (above, left) on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation.

- PHOTOS COURTESY MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT -



The Annual Buffalo Roundup at Custer State Park near Keystone, South Dakota, will be held September 24-26, 2020. Nearly 20,000 people watch the spectacular annual event as men and women on horseback herd the approximately 1,300 buffalo five miles into pens for branding and sorting.

- PHOTO BY CHAD COPPES, COURTESY SOUTH DAKOTA OFFICE OF TOURISM -

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# A WIDE SPOT IN THE ROAD



Fort Griffin State Historic Site near Albany, Texas, is a State Archeological Landmark and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Visitor Center's exhibits offer a good primer to the 1867 fort and the region's history, while regular encampments of re-enactors bring frontier life back to the grounds of the Army outpost.

- PHOTO BY CANDY MOULTON -

many bison herds now grazing on land from Texas to Canada. They are domestic bison privately owned, raised and managed by ranchers who still rely on the native grasses of the Great Plains to nurture the animals.



Candy Moulton is a Wyoming-based road warrior who recommends bison filet from Tiensvold Farms in Rushville, Nebraska.

## WYOMING BUFFALO RANCH TOURS

See bison in native prairie habitat by taking a tour of the 2,500 head of bison on the 60,000-acre Durham Buffalo Ranch near Gillette, Wyoming. At the Terry Bison Ranch just south of Cheyenne, Wyoming, regular tours include opportunities to view the bison herd, ride horses across the prairie or have a meal. Charles Terry started this ranch, but sold it in 1885 to Frances E. Warren, the first governor of Wyoming, who operated it as the South Headquarters for Warren Livestock Company. Under Warren's ownership, the ranch hosted President Theodore Roosevelt, and Gen. Jack Pershing, who married Warren's daughter. Now owned by another family from Cheyenne, the ranch has full visitor services including an RV park and restaurant. It remains a livestock operation.



Durham Buffalo Ranch, Gillette, Wyoming

- COURTESY WYOMING OFFICE OF TOURISM -

## GOOD EATS AND SLEEPS

**GOOD GRUB:** *Union Grille, Fort Benton, MT; Cheyenne Crossing, Lead, SD; The Frontier Grille, Custer, SD; Kate's, Dodge City, KS; Fort Griffin General Merchandise, Albany, TX*

**GOOD LODGING:** *Grand Union Hotel, Fort Benton, MT; Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel, Yellowstone National Park, WY; Powder House, Keystone, SD; Custer State Park, Custer, SD; Boot Hill Casino & Resort, Dodge City, KS; MCM Eleganté Suites, Abilene, TX*

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**BY SHERRY MONAHAN**

# Gunpowder to Oysters

*A miner, a cook and a housewife all walked into a store to get groceries and supplies.*



While today it is the Odd Fellows Hall in Paradise Valley, Nevada, in 1898, Fred M. Buckingham (behind the counter) sold everything from firearms to coffee (right, foreground) in his Humboldt Valley store.

— PHOTOS COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS'S PARADISE VALLEY FOLKLIFE PROJECT COLLECTION —

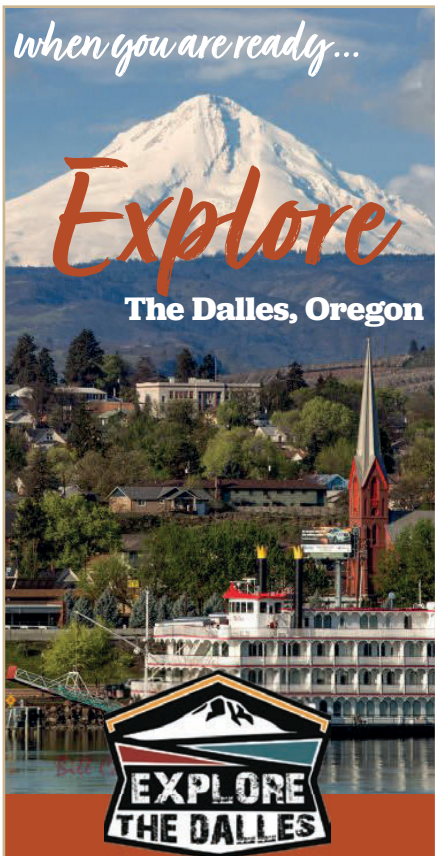
I know, it sounds like the start of a bad joke, but they all did. During the 19th century they frequented the local grocer, mercantile or family goods store. Most carried produce, canned goods, dried foods, spices, coffee, flour and anything food-related. Many sold gunpowder, coal oil and dynamite right alongside onions and oysters.

Pioneers planned their day to include a visit to the store to gather the ingredients for meals and other household items. In Little Rock, Arkansas, shoppers could find flour, lard, hams, sugar, syrup, butter, jellies and candies right alongside coal oil, soap, candles and vinegar. According to an advertisement in the March 29, 1870, edition of the *Daily Arkansas Gazette*, customers could also pick up some hay, bran and oats along with, “one thousand and one other things.” At Natt & Hammond’s in Stockton, California, pioneers chose from groceries, cement, plaster of Paris, fire bricks, nails and crockery. Carney, Fenlon, & Co. in Leavenworth, Kansas, offered eight types of sugar including New Orleans, loaf, crushed, and powdered. They sold coffee, nuts, canned fruits, sauces,

soap, candles, crackers, tea, nails and wrapping paper.

Lincoln, Nebraska’s Good Luck Grocery offered quite a selection of high-end provisions in 1883. They advertised, “... everything in the grocery line to be found in a first-class house. Prices guaranteed lower than any other house in the city.” They sold Eagle condensed milk, Spanish olives, French peas, fresh oysters, Royal baked macaroni, Italian salad oil, Batavia canned goods, Crosse & Blackwell’s pickles, Anderson’s bulk preserves, Scotch orange marmalade, New York cream cheese, British salt, Mack’s milk chocolate, imported Edam and parmesan cheese and several types of coffee. They sold Tebbett’s Arabian mixture, Arbuckle’s Ariosa, Dillworth’s Java, Levering’s roasted Rio, O.G. Mandheling’s Green Java and Arbuckle’s Paska roasted coffee.

Coffee was a big deal on the frontier, and in the early days it was sold green and had to be roasted before it was ground and brewed for a hot beverage. Mercantile stores often advertised when they received a coffee grinder and offered roasted coffee for sale. Ricker & Lee in Galveston, Texas,



*When you are ready...*

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General stores were focal points for small towns across the West, and proprietor Buckingham (left) and associates Frank Kemler (sitting on a bundle of barbed wire), J.D. Richards and Abe Holt await the day's customers while catching up on local gossip.

noted they were roasters of coffee and grinders of spices. It was much easier to just brew up that steaming cup if all the hard work was done for you. Grocers in Caldwell, Idaho, assured their customers, "No more swearing over the old coffee grinder on cold mornings. Stiles & Dunbar grind all coffee purchased of them free." *The Daily Huronite* in Huron, South Dakota, reported, "In one of the show windows of Colcord & Richardson's grocery establishment is a water motor that runs their coffee grinder. It is a 'little daisy' and does it work well." The Cooke City Store in Montana began in 1886 and still operates today. If you want to step back in time, this is your chance. Not much has changed inside, and they still have the same display counters as well as old equipment. Even though shoppers' tastes have changed, you can still get some penny candy from old barrels.

Did you know that iced coffee was a novel idea that people on the frontier were enjoying in the 1800s? It's true and here's an 1884 recipe to sample. ❏

**Sherry Monahan** kicked off her journey into Old West cuisine, spirits and places by authoring *Taste of Tombstone*. Visit [SherryMonahan.com](http://SherryMonahan.com) to learn more about her books, awards and TV appearances.

### ICED COFFEE

½ cup extra strong coffee  
½ cup hot milk  
Ice

Place coffee and milk into a shatter-proof tumbler and shake. Top with ice and "serve at dessert."

Recipe adapted from  
*The Austin Weekly Statesman* (Texas),  
September 4, 1884

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## A Bloody Tragedy

*The tragic end of the Great Sioux War, and new books on the Dakota Wars, B-movie cowboys, gun-collecting and the Greely Polar Expedition.*

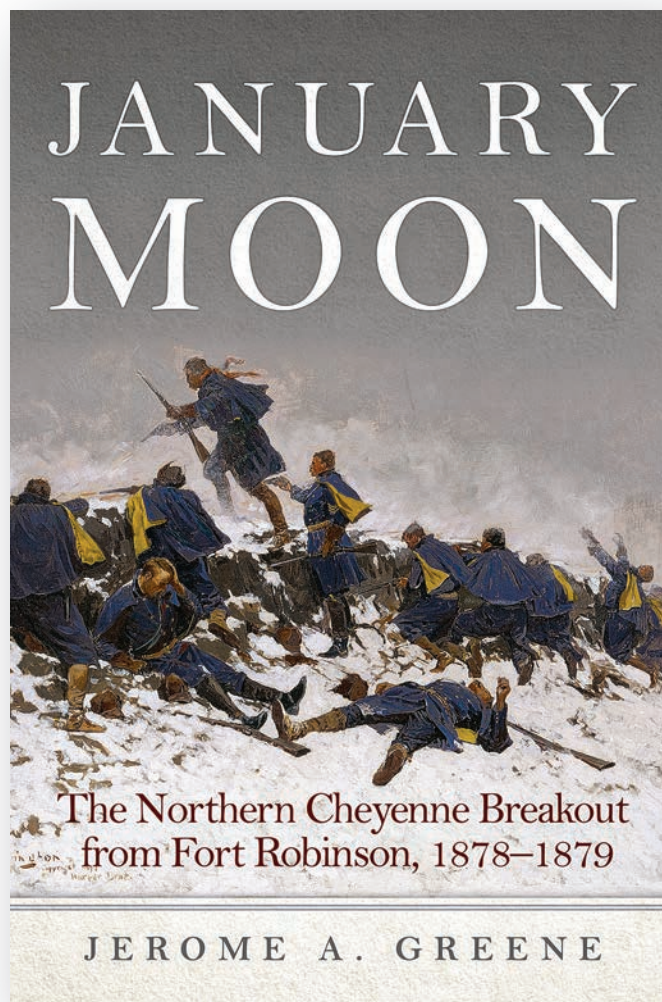
Outside of the massacre at Wounded Knee in December 1890, few events following the Great Sioux War of 1876-77 were as ill-fated as the escape of the Northern Cheyenne from the Darlington Agency near Fort Reno in the Indian Territory (Oklahoma) to Nebraska and Montana between September 1878 and April 1879. Award-winning historian Jerome A. Greene's 12th volume on the Indian Wars, *January Moon: The Northern Cheyenne Breakout from Fort Robinson, 1878-1879* (University of Oklahoma Press, \$29.95), is an extremely detailed and empathetic interpretation of the experience of Dull Knife and Little Wolf's Tsistsistsas people after their surrender to Gen. George Crook at the Red Cloud Agency and Fort Robinson on April 21, 1877; their subsequent march to the Darlington Agency; and their tragedy-laden flight back to Fort Robinson that culminated in the fateful Fort Robinson breakout on January 9, 1879.

Without a doubt, readers of Greene's *January Moon* will have a greater appreciation and sympathy for the Northern Cheyenne people as well as admiration for their descendants who have worked so hard to keep their culture and history alive, despite the many obstacles and hardships their tribe has endured and overcome during the past century and a half. Greene succinctly states in his Preface and Acknowledgements: "The descendants of those people survive today, which has more to do with their ancestors' spirit and tenacity as well as their own commitment to fairness and right than with the federal incentive and military component that largely fostered the events of 1878-79."

Like his former colleagues and fellow historians Robert M. Utley and Paul L. Hedren

(see review on page 42), Jerome Greene is a retired research historian for the National Park Service. He is one of the nation's top academic researchers and chroniclers of the Northern and Southern Plains Indian tribal conflicts with settlers and the U.S. Army. The Colorado historian writes with great empathy for the Northern Cheyenne people and the long-term consequences they suffered before, during and after the Great Sioux War. Scholars and students researching the topic will benefit greatly from his inclusive bibliography and detailed footnotes, as well as the maps and images illustrating the breakout and the Army's actions against the Northern Cheyenne. Also of interest to researchers will be the six appendixes, including lists of Indians wounded, Army casualties, Cheyenne names and relationships and Northern Cheyenne guns surrendered or captured 1878-79.

Greene's *January Moon* should prompt more research into the aftermath of the Great Sioux War (and other Indian conflicts of the late 19th century) and the effects of the disreputable reservation system, the concentration of tribes far from



their Native homelands and the failure of the federal government to protect and treat America's indigenous people with the respect they deserved as human beings and fellow Americans.

—Stuart Rosebrook

# ROUGH DRAFTS



— PHOTO BY ROBERT RAY —

## Western Writers of America 2020 Spur Award Winners

Screenwriter and *True West* contributor John Fusco is among this year's Spur Award-winners from Western Writers of America. Fusco, who received the True Westerner Award in 2019, won the Spur for his original screenplay for the Netflix film, *The Highwaymen*.

Winners and finalists are scheduled to be honored September 4-6 at WWA's convention in Rapid City, S.D. Congratulations to this year's winners in the following categories:

**Biography:** *Nighthawk Rising: A Biography of Accused Cattle Rustler Queen Ann Bassett of Brown's Park* by Diana Allen Kouris (High Plains Press)

**Historical Nonfiction:** *Lakota America: A New History of Indigenous Power* by Pekka Hämäläinen (Yale University Press)

**Historical Novel:** *A Forgotten Evil* by Sheldon Russell (Cennan Books/Cynren Press)

**Mass-Market Paperback Novel:** *Hawke's Target* by Reavis Z. Wortham (Pinnacle/Kensington)

**Romance Novel:** *The Yeggman's Apprentice* by C.K. Crigger (Wolfpack Publishing)

**Traditional Novel:** *Cherokee America* by Margaret Verble (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)

**Short Nonfiction:** "'Worry, USA': Dude Ranch Advertising Looks East, 1915-1945" by Flannery Burke (*Montana The Magazine of Western History*)

**Documentary Script:** *Country Music "Hard Times (1933-1945)," Episode 2* by Dayton Duncan (WETA-TV/PBS)

**Drama Script:** *The Highwaymen* by John Fusco (Netflix)

**First Novel:** *On Swift Horses: A Novel* by Shannon Pufahl (Riverhead Books)

**First Nonfiction Book:** *The Pale-Faced Lie: A True Story* by David Crow (Sandra Jonas Publishing)

For a complete list of winners and finalists in all categories, visit [WesternWriters.org](http://WesternWriters.org).

# LEE MARTIN



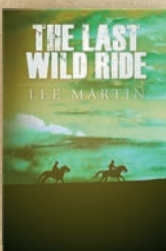
## FAST RIDE TO BOOT HILL

With more plot twists and turns than a Grand Canyon hiking trail, "Fast Ride to Boot Hill: The Legend of Ben Hawks" is an inherently riveting read from cover to cover -- and showcases author Lee Martin's impressive mastery of the western action/adventure genre. Certain to be an immediate and enduringly popular addition to community library Western Fiction collections, "Fast Ride to Boot Hill: The Legend of Ben Hawks" is an especially recommended addition to the personal reading lists of all dedicated western novel fans.

— Library Bookwatch: January 2020, James A. Cox, Editor-in-Chief, Midwest Book Review

"Torn between Old West justice and revenge, reluctant gunslinger Ben Hawks crosses trails with an ornery rancher, a gritty marshal, and feisty women (including his own mother) on his hunt for cunning murderer Brian Avery. Fans of classic westerns should enjoy riding with Ben through Lee Martin's fast-paced, twisty tale."

— Howard Weinstein, New York Times best-selling author of *Galloway's Gamble*

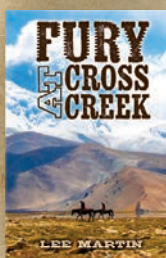


## IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS

"In this novel, fate seemingly unites individuals with intersecting pasts in California. The narrative, too, is believable, as some of the chance encounters among characters aren't as coincidental as they initially appear. The author's concise writing generates lucid passages and a brisk, progressively intense story, courtesy of an increasingly threatening George.

A swiftly paced, entertaining melodrama with a fine cast of characters."

— Kirkus Indie, Kirkus Media LLC

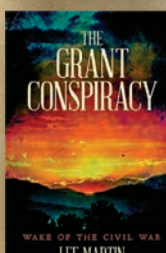


## FURY AT CROSS CREEK

When Laredo learns his true identity, he becomes a living target as he and the scout who raised him ride into the same deadly feud.

"A fast paced Western actioner that is sure to please. Reminiscent of the Hatfields and McCoy's. Fans of quick-shooting action, damsels in distress, and a righteous ending are sure to enjoy this new Western thriller."

— Linell Jeppsen, author of *Far West: The Diary of Eleanor Higgins*.



## GRANT CONSPIRACY

In 1880 Colorado, a lawyer, newspaper woman and black veteran try to protect Grant from an evil law firm seeking revenge for losing their fortunes on Black Friday.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CLOAK & DAGGER: "Lee Martin's *The Grant Conspiracy* plays out like a game of checkers with bodies piling up and the surviving characters vying for the final position."

— TRUE WEST April 2016 by author Eric H. Heisner.



## TRAIL OF THE FAST GUN

Beautiful Elena Barker secures Ben Darringer's release from prison with a bargain: A pardon for killing her brother -- if he can save her father's ranch from ruthless encroachers. As a hired gun in the middle of an all-out range war, Ben takes justice in his own hands but soon faces Zevala, the fastest gun in the territory, with no guarantee of survival.



First of Lee Martin's 17 early Westerns to be available on Amazon and e-book on Kindle, all an important part of Martin's credits of 23 Western novels, including *Shadow on the Mesa*, for which Martin wrote the highly rated movie with Kevin Sorbo.

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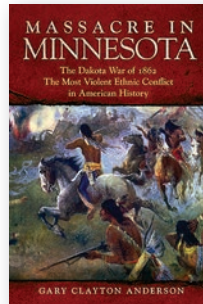
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### Dakota Revolt

The story of the Minnesota Uprising of 1862 has long needed a new telling, and Gary Clayton Anderson serves it up big. In *Massacre in Minnesota: The Dakota War of 1862, the Most Violent Ethnic Conflict in American History* (University of Oklahoma Press, \$32.95) Anderson explores the story's obvious and unobvious and dares also to take readers into its dark shadows, where the state's founding fathers were far more complicit than history cares to remember, where the horrors at the farm places and the reality of captivities in Dakota tipis were ugly truths, and where shackled incarcerations and the march to the gallows will make readers cringe. Anderson gets this story right, every grim bit of it.

—Paul L. Hedren, author of *Rosebud*,  
June 17, 1876: Prelude to  
the Little Big Horn

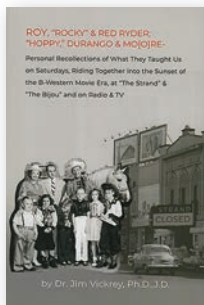


### Saturday Morning Heroes

Jim Vickrey's *Roy, 'Rocky' and Red Ryder* (Dorrance Publishing Company, \$26) is the memoir of a lawyer and former university president whose misspent youth was dominated by Saturday matinees in Montgomery, Alabama, in the 1940s and '50s. Well-informed and opinionated as it must be, Vickrey makes convincing arguments for his favorite B-Western stars—Roy Rogers, Alan 'Rocky' Lane, William Boyd, Charles Starrett, Clayton Moore, et al. He analyzes sidekicks by group—juvenile vs. musical vs. comedic, and by quality: Gabby Hayes at one end and Pinky Lee at the other. From the zenith of Republic Pictures, to the nadir of P.R.C., Vickrey brings a context to the

evolution, devolution, and electronic resurrection of the films that, right or wrong, taught boys to be men.

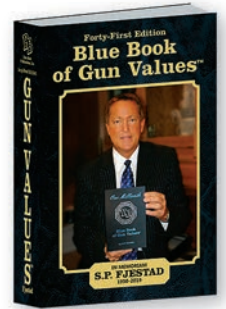
—Henry C. Parke, True West's  
Western Film and  
TV Editor



### Finding Your Gun

Eliminate the guesswork of current values of firearms—new or vintage—with the *41st Edition, Blue Book of Gun Values*. Thoroughly updated with over 60 new manufacturer/trademarks, the softcover has nearly 1,900 makes, 180,000 gun values, almost 30,000 different gun model descriptions, and all the new 2020 makes and models. It also has a Serialization Index to make finding serial number information easier, proof marks guide and much more. Dedicated to longtime author and publisher, S.P. Fjestad, this *Blue Book* embraces an in-depth biography of his life and work, with memorials, images and quotes from those who knew him best. The *41st Edition, Blue Book of Gun Values* is also available on flash drive and as a monthly updated (with hi-res color images) online subscription at [BlueBookOfGunValues.com](http://BlueBookOfGunValues.com).

—Phil Spangenberg, True West's  
Firearms Editor

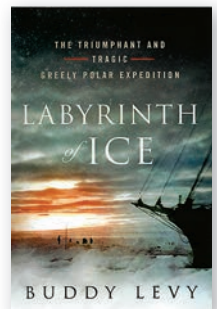


### Triumph and Tragedy

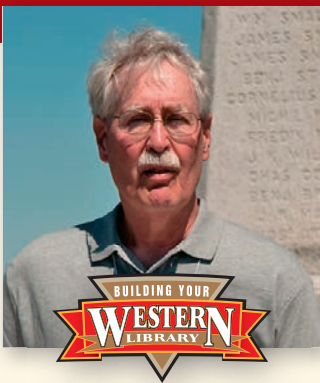
Buddy Levy has written an astonishing history of a polar expedition that went awry in *Labyrinth of Ice: The Triumphant and Tragic Greely Polar Expedition* (St. Martin's Press, \$39.99). This true tale reads like a thriller novel and is chilling in more ways than one. First, you are exposed to the cold temperatures and harrowing adventures of Lt. Adolphus W. Greely and his crew of 24 scientists and explorers as they set off in 1882

to reach Farthest North. Their goal was to claim the title of traveling farther toward the North Pole than any other explorers. While not a subject of the American West, this book of adventure and trailblazing definitely has the heroism, adventure, sacrifice and excitement *True West* readers will appreciate.

—Candy Moulton, author of *Everyday Life Among the American Indians*,  
1800-1900



- COURTESY C. LEE NOYES -



### LITTLE BIGHORN HISTORIAN SHARES PASSION FOR THE BATTLE'S ARCHAEOLOGY

C. Lee Noyes developed a lifelong interest in the 1876 Battle of Little Bighorn and Indian Wars after watching *She Wore A Yellow Ribbon* and other John Ford Westerns as a child in Massachusetts. In addition to numerous articles and presentations on the subject, he served as editor of *The Battlefield Dispatch*, the quarterly newsletter of the Custer Battlefield Historical and Museum Association. He co-authored *Last Man Standing: William Spencer McCaskey*.

Noyes recommends these five studies on the archaeological history of Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.

1 **Digging Into Custer's Last Stand** by Sandy Barnard (AST): An excellent introduction to the subject, it tells the story of the archaeological surveys at Little Bighorn Battlefield in the 1980s that included the author and many other volunteers.

2 **Evidence and the Custer Enigma** by Jerome A. Greene (Outbooks): This study attests to the little-known archaeological research at the battlefield long before the well-publicized surveys initiated there after the 1983 fire.

3 **Archaeological Perspectives on the Battle of the Little Bighorn** by Douglas D. Scott, Richard Alan Fox, et al. (Oklahoma): Among the significant findings of the 1980s surveys were that many warriors were armed with repeating rifles and that several soldier markers on Custer's battlefield are spurious.

4 **Archaeology, History, and Custer's Last Battle** by Richard Fox (Oklahoma): Synthesizing archaeological and historical evidence, Fox argues that the cavalry's "tactical disintegration" (and perhaps superior warrior firepower) determined the outcome on Custer's battlefield.

5 **Uncovering History: Archaeological Investigations at the Little Bighorn** by Douglas D. Scott (Oklahoma): This clear, comprehensive review demonstrates that the recovered artifacts provide a more complete picture of "the most chaotic of human endeavors, a pitched battle."

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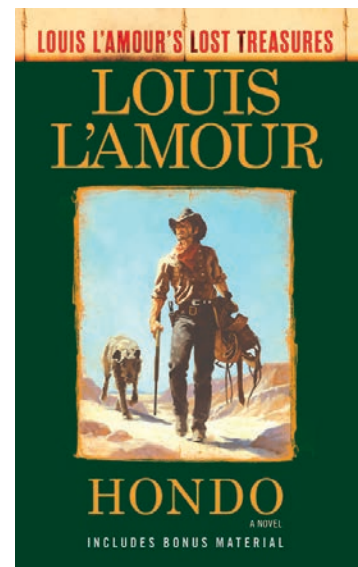
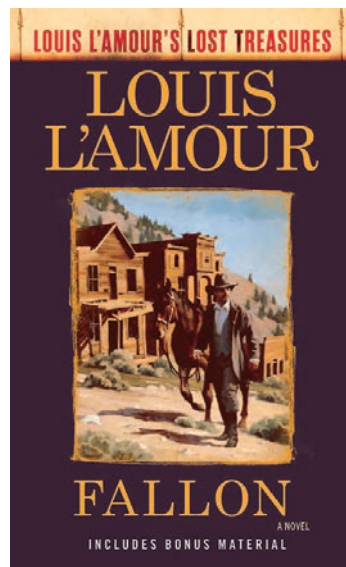
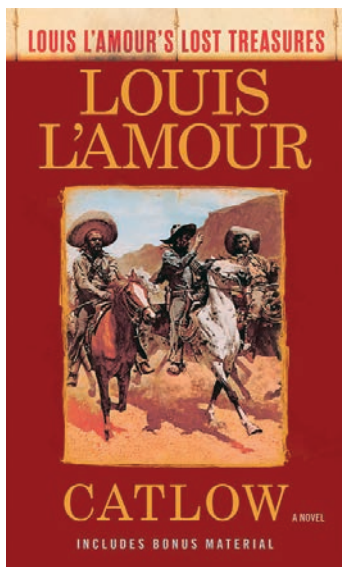
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BY STUART ROSEBROOK

# Keeping the Western Alive

*Western publishers and independent authors chronicle the West, one story at a time.*

While many brick-and-mortar stores temporarily closed during the coronavirus pandemic, many booksellers continue to sell their Old West titles through their personal or company websites. *Amazon.com* remains the number one seller of books in the world, and is especially important to independent Western authors, many of whom are *True West* contributors. I know we will all return to our local bookstores as soon as they reopen, but in the meantime, I recommend these publishers:



Louis L'Amour still rides tall in the saddle for Bantam, an imprint of Penguin Random House (*RandomHouseBooks.com*), in its popular "Louis L'Amour's Lost Treasure Series." Each of the 24 titles in the series includes exclusive bonus material.

**Arcadia/HistoryPress:** If you love local history and historical photographs, then I'm betting you are a reader of Arcadia/History Press's series on Western U.S. history, including titles by *True West* contributors Brad Courtney, Lynda Sánchez, Rod Timinus and Marshall Trimble.

[ArcadiaPublishing.com](http://ArcadiaPublishing.com)

**Farcountry Press:** Based in Helena, Montana, Farcountry offers a catalog focused on local and regional Western history and biography, including titles from Montana Historical Society and *True West* contributor Larry Len Peterson.

[FarcountryPress.com](http://FarcountryPress.com)

**Five Star:** A division of Gale/Cengage, Five Star is currently one of the country's largest publishers of traditional Western and Frontier fiction authors, many of whom are *True West* contributors, including Michael Farmer, Melody Groves, Monty McCord and Michael Zimmer.

[Cengage.com](http://Cengage.com)

**Pinnacle:** A division of Kensington, Pinnacle is the largest publisher of Western mass-market paperbacks and home to many of your favorite *True West* contributors, including Johnny D. Boggs, Brett Cogburn, Max Allan Collins, Courtney Joyner and Max McCoy.

[KensingtonBooks.com](http://KensingtonBooks.com)

**TorForge:** A division of Macmillan, one of the largest publishers in the world, TorForge has a solid backlist of Western titles published in trade and mass market paperback, including those by Michael Blakely, Matt Braun, Loren Estleman, Elmer Kelton and Candy Moulton.

[US.Macmillan.com](http://US.Macmillan.com)

**TwoDot:** A division of Rowman & Littlefield, TwoDot is currently the nation's top imprint of popular Old West history, and home to *True West* contributors Julia Bricklin, Chris Enss, Melody Groves, Doug Hocking, Bill Markley and Monty McCord.

[Rowman.com](http://Rowman.com)

**Wolfpack Publishing:** According to the April 24, 2020 *Publisher's Weekly*.com article "Series are King at Wolfpack Publishing," "more than 90 percent of its business in digital book sales is finding success with its direct-to-consumer focus during nationwide shelter-in-place orders." Authors with popular Western series include Peter Brandvold, Carol Crigger, Linell Jeppsen, Preston Lewis, Larry Martin, Robert Vaughan and Lane R. Warenski.

[WolfpackPublishing.com](http://WolfpackPublishing.com)

### University and Historical Society Publishers



At the backbone of Western history publishing are university and historical society imprints. Current catalogs are available online and books can be ordered directly from the university press websites. For 19th-century Western history, I recommend these university imprints: Arizona, California, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Texas, Oklahoma, Texas A&M, Washington State and Yale, plus South Dakota and Texas's historical societies' imprints.





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## WHICH OUTLAW MADE THE WILD WEST WILDER: BILLY THE KID OR JESSE JAMES?

This book is rollicking good fun - and serious history too.  
— Nancy Plain, President of Western Writers of America

Anyone who loves Old West history will enjoy the Western novelist-historian's easy-to-read style, his sense of place, his ability to present the facts and his seemingly uncynical perspective about the ongoing debates that swirl around the two outlaws.  
— Stuart Rosebrook, Editor of *True West Magazine*

A TwoDot book available through your local bookstore or any on-line bookstore.

## TV's 'The Lone Ranger' at 70

*Of all the people the Masked Man and Tonto saved, the most crucial was Clayton Moore.*

With the exception of one season, Clayton Moore starred in the title role of *The Lone Ranger* with his good friend and co-star Jay Silverheels as Tonto. The first original Western television series debuted in 1949 and was a primetime staple until 1957, after which it continued in syndication to entertain generations of fans.

— COURTESY ABC TELEVISION —

**T**his past September 2019, *The Lone Ranger*, TV's first Western series, turned 70. Incredibly, every weekday an average of 16 of the 221 episodes are aired on various channels.

When actor Clayton Moore was asked to audition, he was already well-aware of the radio show which had begun in 1933. Clayton's daughter, Dawn Moore, explains, "He listened to it with his own father. The Lone Ranger was already a beloved character in their house."

Producer George Trendle and writer Fran Striker had co-created *The Lone Ranger* (although Trendle alone owned the copyright) and engineered the transfer from radio to TV. According to Moore, in his autobiography, *I Was That Masked Man*, Tonto was cast first. "No one but Jay Silverheels was considered to play Tonto." Both men were physically up for their athletic roles that rarely employed stuntmen. Silverheels, a Canada-born Mohawk, had been a professional lacrosse player and

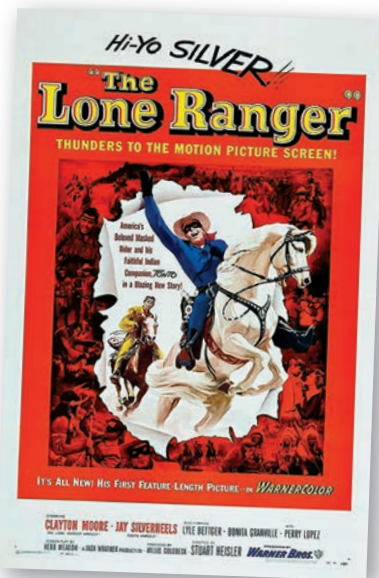


Golden Gloves champion, and Moore had been a trapeze artist and acrobat. Both men's acting careers began with bits in Poverty Row Bs. Silverheels had graduated to small roles in big films like *Captain from Castile* with Tyrone Power, and *Key Largo* with Humphrey Bogart. Moore had become "King of the Serials" at Republic. When, after a long interview, Trendle asked the actor if he wanted the role, Moore replied, "Mr. Trendle, I am The Lone Ranger."

The Lone Ranger was John Reid, a Texas Ranger who was ambushed with five other Rangers, including his idolized older brother. Butch Cavendish's gang thought they had killed all six, but Tonto found Reid and nursed him back to health. Tonto inadvertently gave him a new identity when he commented, "Now you lone Ranger."

Moore, who always wanted to be a policeman or a cowboy, fulfilled both goals in one role. "I fell in love with the character, and never wanted to play another role." While that was doubtless true, there was more to it, and the part could not have come at a better time in his life, his daughter reveals. "Dad was 34; his father had died of a heart attack. His eldest brother had committed suicide. His middle brother was in an asylum. Then he's handed a script for a character who's devoted to finding justice for his brother's death. Who spends his entire life saving people. How much could that have resonated with him, to do something, on a much larger scale, that he couldn't do for his own family?"

Everything was great, until Moore was fired. "Trendle was famously shrewd and



On the strength of popularity of the ABC television series, Warner Brothers produced the 1956 feature length film *The Lone Ranger*. The popular Western also received broad overseas distribution and made Clayton Moore and Jay Silverheels international stars.

- COURTESY WARNER BROTHERS -

tight-fisted," says Dawn. "Someone told Trendle that dad was selling silver bullets at some personal appearance." Sure that the mask made the actor instantly replaceable, Trendle hired John Hart, who was not a bad actor, but was no Clayton Moore; the audience knew the difference, and the ratings dropped. Hart was happy to leave. "They made every one in two days," he told biographer James Van Hise, "and we didn't get paid worth a damn."

Moore was hired back the following year. Trendle was selling *The Lone Ranger* to Texas oilman Jack Wrather, a deal dependent on Moore being back in Silver's saddle. Trendle would receive \$3 million; writer Stryker's cut would be a \$4,000 bonus.

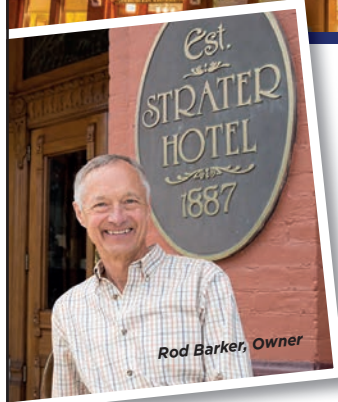
*The Lone Ranger* was cancelled in 1957. While Silverheels would appear in more than 30 movies and TV series, Moore would never portray another character; he began two decades of Lone Ranger personal appearances, barnstorming cross-country, appearing at rodeos, store openings and carnival midways.

Although The Wrather Corporation would later claim that they "allowed" him to make those appearances, Moore's daughter clarifies, "When Dad was on the road, [he] had to pay Wrather \$1,000 a week... Once, Dad had to sell his own car so he could get back home."



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After the final season of *The Lone Ranger* in 1957, Clayton Moore maintained his popular character's persona and made thousands of public appearances over the next two decades as the law-abiding masked man.

— TRUE WEST ARCHIVES —

Then, in 1975, Wrather's lawyers told Moore, 60, he was too old to make appearances as The Lone Ranger, or even as The Actor Who Played The Lone Ranger. Never mind that for twenty years he'd paid dearly for the privilege of keeping Wrather's character alive, and followed Trendle's edict to never appear in public without the mask. They were making a new Lone Ranger movie, and Moore was finished.



Despite the legal issues caused by the Wrather Corporation's 1979 court order directing Clayton Moore to cease wearing the Lone Ranger's mask and making paid appearances as the Western hero, Moore persisted with his belief in the character's importance and exchanged the mask for sunglasses, saying: "It's my symbol, it's the Lone Ranger, and if I may say, it's Americana. I guess when I go up to the big ranch in the sky, I'll still have it on."

— PORTRAIT BY STEVE SHAPIRO, COURTESY PERSONAL COLLECTION OF DAWN MOORE —

Only he wasn't. "Dad didn't have a legal leg to stand on [but] took Wrather to court—then lost, then carried on anyway. This textbook example of moral courage is when he started to shift from a long-ago faded TV star, to an American folk hero."

Unable to wear the mask, he switched to sunglasses; Corning hired him as spokesmodel for their shades. The controversy brought new interest, and soon Moore was earning

more than he had in years. In 1996, I shook Clayton Moore's hand at a book-signing two blocks from Republic Studios. Hundreds of fans waited in the store and down the block: soldiers, California Highway Patrol officers, police—people who came to tell Clayton Moore that his example inspired them to choose a career of service.

Los Angeles deejay Rick Dees campaigned and got Clayton Moore, like Jay Silverheels, a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Of the current 2,686 stars, only one names an actor and the role he's beloved for: "Clayton Moore—The Lone Ranger." Dees made sure they could never take it away again. *Hi-yo Silver! Away!*



## BLU-RAY REVIEW

### CIMARRON (1960)

(Warner Archive, Blu-ray \$21.99) Re-making RKO's 1931 epic, the first Western to earn a Best Picture Oscar, was a mistake. Despite great horse opera pros—director Anthony Mann and star Glenn Ford—Edna Ferber's sweeping novel swept too much action offscreen. Ford's wife, Maria Schell, Austrian though of American parents, laughs through the first half and weeps through the second, as she and viewers get by-the-decade hints of where Ford has gone. Still, the land-rush sequence is wonderful.

Henry C. Parke, Western Films Editor for *True West*, is a screenwriter, and blogs at *Henry'sWesternRoundup.blogspot.com*. His book of interviews, *Indians and Cowboys*, will be published later this year.



Thirty years after *The Lone Ranger's* final season on ABC, Clayton Moore received his long-awaited star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame on June 5, 1987. Fans can find the star on the 6900 block of Hollywood Boulevard in Los Angeles.

— COURTESY PERSONAL COLLECTION OF DAWN MOORE —



# ONE MAN KNEW

According to an excellent book, *The Great Influenza* by John M. Barry, the deadliest plague in history—1918-1919—started in Haskell County, Kansas, and one man, Dr. Loring Miner, knew firsthand about it, because many of his patients were dying, but no one would listen.

He issued a warning, published in *Public Health Reports* to alert health officials to this new outbreak and it is the first reference to the outbreak on public record.

And then, in March of 1918, the disease disappeared. The schools reopened and the locals went back to work. And everyone turned their attention to the war in Europe.

A young soldier named Dean Nilson came home to Jean, Kansas, on leave

from Camp Funston, which is in the Fort Riley, Kansas, military reservation. The fort held, on average, 56,000 troops. After his leave, Nilson returned to Camp Funston, and within a short time 1,100 men were sick and admitted to the post hospital.

Many others didn't show symptoms and were shipped overseas and that's when the numbers go off the charts, with the lowest estimate of the pandemic's worldwide death toll being at 21 million and some

now estimate the number is at least 50 to 100 million deaths.

One Kansas frontier doctor tried to warn everyone, but they weren't listening.

—Bob Boze Bell



Emergency hospital set up to deal with overflow flu cases at Camp Funston, Kansas in 1918.



Dr. Loring Miner

— PHOTO COURTESY NATIONAL MUSEUM OF HEALTH AND MEDICINE  
ARTWORK BY BOB BOZE BELL —

BY LEO W. BANKS

# Deadwood, South Dakota

*The Black Hills boomtown celebrates the Old West every day of the year.*



**T**he discovery of gold in a tree-lined gulch brought Deadwood to life in 1876. The Black Hills boomtown was guaranteed immortality when Wild Bill Hickok, one of the West's great shootists, met his end there at the hand of back-shooter "Broken Nose" Jack McCall.

Was Hickok holding aces and eights, the dead man's hand, when the deed was done? We'll quote from the great Western film, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*: "When the legend becomes fact, print the legend."

Deadwood's Wild West past thrives during Wild Bill Days in June. The event takes over the town with lots of food and dancing to live music by popular country acts.

"We stop vehicle traffic and put a stage in the middle of Main Street, so our historic buildings become an amphitheater for two days," says Amanda Kille, Deadwood Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau's marketing and sponsorship director. "It's great fun."

A prospecting club teaches gold panning and how to use a rocker box. On Saturday afternoon, actors from the Deadwood Alive troop put on the play *Trial of Jack McCall* on the outdoor stage, the only time the venerable show is free to the public.

The performance is great entertainment as it retells what happened the day Hickok was assassinated at Nuttal & Mann's Number 10 Saloon. The free weekend party swells the town of 1,200 with 10,000 visitors.

Founded in America's centennial year, Deadwood, South Dakota, has always celebrated Independence Day with great fanfare and parades, even in its earliest decades. On July 4, 1888, following a grand parade, two hub-and-hub firehose races were held: one between a Deadwood and a Council Bluffs, Iowa, team, and one between two local Chinese hose teams.

According to the *Rapid City Journal* of July 6, 1888, Hi-Kee's team won the race and the \$50 prize money, while the Deadwoods, in a record 29 seconds, beat the Independents of Council Bluffs for the prize money of \$500.

— PHOTO BY JOHN C.H. GRABILL, COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS —

An estimated two million visit every year, and the number has been rising since the May 2019 release of HBO's *Deadwood: The Movie*.

The Days of '76 bash in July kicks off with two narrated parades, one on Friday night and another Saturday morning. The events feature the same horse-drawn stagecoaches, wagons and carriages that were used in the first celebration, in 1924.

When those conveyances aren't on the street, visitors can see them at the Days of '76 Museum, where they're part of a 7,000-square-foot exhibit on early transportation in the Black Hills. Also see displays of 100 long arms and 20 handguns that helped settle the West.

Held at the same time, the Days of '76 Rodeo attracts cowboys from around the West. It has been named PRCA rodeo of the year 18 times.

Visit the 1892 Adams House, a Queen Anne-style home described as the "grandest house west of the Mississippi." Down the street, stop at Adams Museum to see an impressive



A summer vacation to the Black Hills should be booked well in advance, especially for one of Deadwood's big summer events, including the award-winning '76 Days, held every July. The annual celebration of the city's founding in 1876 includes two parades and the always-popular '76 Days Rodeo. All the historic rolling stock used in the '76 Days Parade can be seen year round in the '76 Days Museum.

collection of Indian artifacts, including war clubs and headdresses, and numerous images and drawings of Hickok, including some of his personal belongings.

"We have a steam-powered saddleback locomotive," says Darrel Nelson, exhibits director for Deadwood History. "It's the first locomotive to come to the Black Hills, and people are surprised to see it right here inside our building."

A new entry, the Brothel Museum, opens sometime this summer. Outlaw Square opened in the fall of 2019, and Kille says 14 weeks of summer programming are being planned, including a movie night and concert series. History will dominate Thursdays with speakers and educational programs.

See downtown from a stagecoach or on foot. At Broken Boot Gold Mine, walk by candlelight into shafts as a guide describes life underground between 1878 and 1904.

The Bullock Hotel is a mainstay, built in 1894 by legendary lawman Seth Bullock and renovated to recapture its frontier feel. Bullock is said to roam the halls at night, which might explain the occasional knock or whisper.

A mile north of Deadwood, visit Tatanka: The Story of the Bison, featuring 14 bronze sculptures of Indian horseback riders chasing bison. The site, owned by actor Kevin Costner, also has a hands-on interpretive center focusing on the Northern Plains Indians.

**FUN FACT:** The Adams Museum displays Potato Creek Johnny's gold nugget. At 7.346 troy ounces, it's the second largest ever found in the Black Hills.



Leo W. Banks is an award-winning writer based in Tucson. His newest mystery novel is titled *Champagne Cowboys*.



A poignant and reflective destination in Deadwood that should not be missed is the historic Mt. Moriah Cemetery. A nominal \$2 entrance fee helps maintain the graveyard, the final resting place of Wild Bill Hickok, Calamity Jane (adjacent to each other) and Sheriff Seth Bullock, whose gravesite sits above the cemetery and has a grand view of Deadwood Gulch below.



When following the trail of Wild Bill Hickok's life in Deadwood, see the Adams Museum's exhibits on the famous gunfighter for an excellent primer on the Western shootist's short, but dramatic life and death in the Black Hills gold rush town.

- ALL PHOTOS BY CHAD COPPES, COURTESY SOUTH DAKOTA TOURISM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED -

# WHERE HISTORY MEETS THE HIGHWAY

Wild Bill Days honoring the life and times of Wild Bill Hickok in Deadwood will be held June 18–20, 2020. The Deadwood Alive acting company will perform *Trial of Jack McCall* (right) on the Main Stage on Main Street at noon on Saturday, June 20.

To plan your visit, stop at the Deadwood Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau, 501 Main Street. [Deadwood.com](http://Deadwood.com)

## MOUNT MORIAH CEMETERY

See the graves of Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane. Her dying request, "Bury me beside Wild Bill," was granted. Also resting with Bill is "Potato Creek" Johnny Perrett, a four-foot-three-inch Welsh immigrant who discovered his famous gold nugget in 1929. The find made him a celebrity featured in *Life* magazine. He died in 1943, at 77. [CityOfDeadwood.com](http://CityOfDeadwood.com)

## DEADWOOD ALIVE

See shootouts on Main Street three times a day during the summer, and re-enactments of the shooting of Wild Bill four times a day inside Saloon No. 10. Check the schedule at the Masonic Temple for regular performances of *Trial of Jack McCall*. The play has been performed since the 1920s, making it one of the West's longest-running. [DeadwoodAlive.com](http://DeadwoodAlive.com)



## MOUNT ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL FRIENDSHIP TOWER

Less than three miles from downtown, take a short hike to the monument Seth Bullock created to honor his good friend, the onetime president. See terrific views of the surrounding Black Hills. [Deadwood.com](http://Deadwood.com)

## TATANKA: THE STORY OF THE BISON

See costumes from the Academy Award-winning 1991 Western *Dances with Wolves*. The gift shop has carved-bone bison head pendants and traditional Lakota drums made of cottonwood and tanned cowhide. [StoryOfTheBison.com](http://StoryOfTheBison.com)

# DEADWOOD: Get the Real Story

Adams Museum

Days of '76 Museum

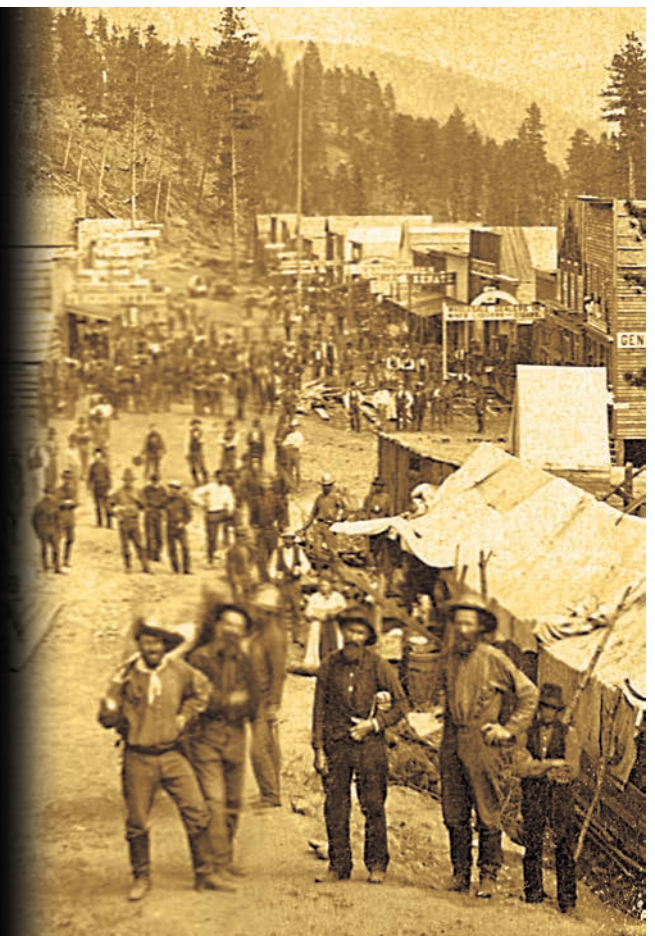
Historic Adams House

Homestake Adams Research  
and Cultural Center

Mount Moriah Cemetery

DEADWOOD  
HISTORY  
[DeadwoodHistory.com](http://DeadwoodHistory.com)


DEADWOOD  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
[CityofDeadwood.com](http://CityofDeadwood.com)



BY STUART ROSEBROOK

# The West Awaits!

PLAN NOW TO DISCOVER THE HEART AND HERITAGE OF THE OLD WEST ON FOUR ROAD TRIPS TO TAKE WHEN THE TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ARE LIFTED.



**T**he great Western American road trip is a bucket list item for travelers all over the world. During this worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, we know that travel is limited at best and nonexistent at worst. Although the nation awaits the lifting of travel restrictions and the slow reopening of each state—including parks, historic attractions, museums, hotels, restaurants and bars—*True West's* editorial team offers four distinct scenic, heritage trips across the Western United States to inspire your future travel. We hope to capture your imagination and encourage you to plan a road trip to discover the Old West in a way you've never experienced before.

## WYOMING'S WILD WEST:

### The Butch and Sundance Trail

Wyoming is famous worldwide for its cowboy culture, its rich American Indian history, its natural wonders and endless, wide open spaces. Annually, nearly nine million visitors to the Northern Plains-Rocky Mountain state tour its historic sites, national parks and monuments, explore its inviting small towns and cities, and attend internationally famous events including Cheyenne Frontier Days. Visitors also enjoy recreation in Wyoming's back-country, camping, hiking, fishing, hunting, trail riding, skiing and wildlife-watching.

Travelers who love the Old West will enjoy the Butch and Sundance Trail in Laramie, home of the University of Wyoming, the American Heritage Center, Laramie Plains Museum and the Wyoming Territorial Prison State Historic Site.

From Laramie, start the tour in the capital city of Cheyenne.

**Mileage:** 600 miles

**Time:** Five to seven days; if you have two weeks or a month to see more of Wyoming, do it!

Devils Tower National Monument is 30 miles northwest of Sundance, Wyoming. The scenic geologic landmark is a sacred site to Native people and is also known by the names Bear Lodge, Bears Lodge, Grey Horn Butte, Tree Rock and The Place Where Bears Live.

— COURTESY GATES FRONTIERS FUND WYOMING COLLECTION WITHIN THE CAROL M. HIGHSMITH ARCHIVE, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS —



Butch Cassidy (above) was incarcerated in the Wyoming Territorial Prison in Laramie from 1894-1896. Today, the Wyoming Territorial Prison State Historic Site has been restored and offers visitors a window into life behind bars in the early days of Wyoming history.

- WYOMING TERRITORIAL PRISON PHOTO COURTESY WYOMING TOURISM/BUTCH CASSIDY COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS -

**Buffalo:** At this gateway to the Big Horn Mountains, stay at the famous Occidental Hotel, tour the Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum and, if possible, make plans to attend Longmire Days, scheduled for August 13-16, 2020.

**Sheridan:** The historic Sheridan Inn is the perfect place to stay while exploring key sites of the Great Sioux War, including the Battle of Rosebud and Battle of Little Bighorn, north across the border in Montana. In town, visit the Mint Bar, King's Ropes and in nearby Bighorn, the award-winning Brinton Museum.

**Gillette:** When visiting the county seat of Campbell County and a coal-mining center of the West, a tour of the county's Rockpile Museum should not be missed.

**Sundance:** Here's where Harry Alonzo Longabaugh, aka the "Sundance Kid," earned his nickname after a stint in the local jail. Enjoy the historic town, the Crook County Museum and a tour of Devil's Tower National Monument, just 30 miles away.

**Best Websites:** *TravelWyoming.com*, *NPS.gov*

Visitors to Sundance, Wyoming, will enjoy the town's historic district, local museums and public statue dedicated to the legendary outlaw Harry "Sundance Kid" Longabaugh, who adopted the nickname after 18 months in the town jail in the late 1880s.

- SUNDANCE KID STATUE COURTESY WYOMING TOURISM/SUNDANCE KID AND ETTA PLACE COURTESY TRUE WEST ARCHIVES -

## BUCKET LIST

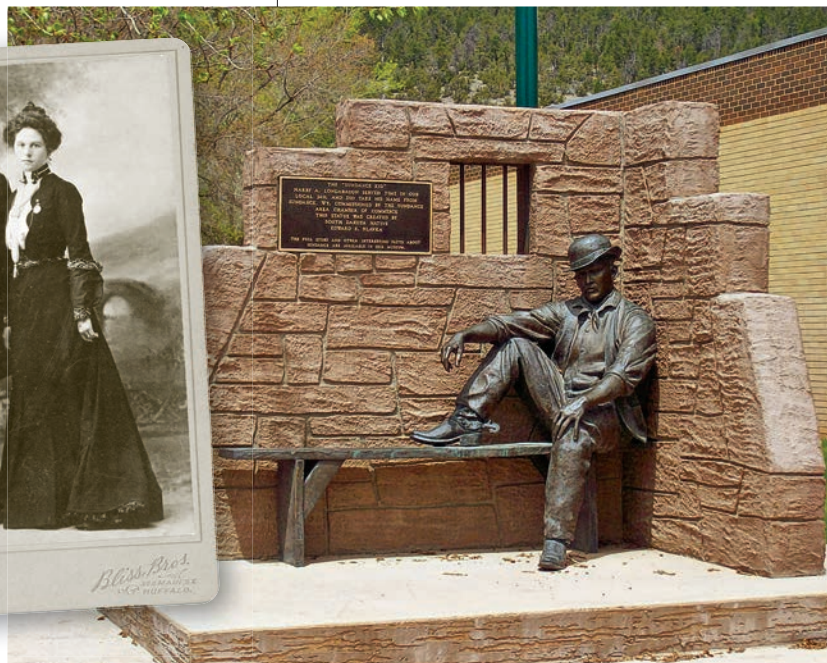
**Laramie:** Book a room at the Mercantile Loft Vacation Rental, and enjoy a long weekend soaking up Old West history at the University of Wyoming's American Heritage Center, Laramie Plains Museum, Laramie Historic Railroad Dept and the Wyoming Territorial Prison State Historic Site. Don't miss the prison's exhibit on outlaw Butch Cassidy's time behind its bars.

**Cheyenne:** Check into The Plains Hotel downtown and begin your tour at the Wyoming state capital. Between good meals in the city's entertainment district, visit the historic Union Station, the Nelson Museum of the West, the Wyoming State Museum, Cheyenne Frontier Days Old West Museum and the Cheyenne Depot Museum. Cheyenne Frontier Days is still scheduled for July 17-26, 2020!

**Fort Laramie National Historic Site:** A significant fort in Western U.S. history, Fort Laramie was founded in 1834 and was a strategic post during the Plains Indian Wars. Visitors who take the self-guided or guided tour will learn the importance of Fort Laramie to U.S. history until it closed in 1890.

**Casper:** Old West history buffs should not miss a tour of Fort Caspar Museum, an 1865 frontier outpost on the North Platte River, completely rebuilt by the WPA in the 1930s.

**Kaycee:** The historic ranching town is home to the Johnson County Cattle War's TA Ranch and gateway to Hole-in-the-Wall, the rugged hideout of Butch Cassidy's the Wild Bunch gang. Don't miss the Chris LeDoux monument; Kaycee was his hometown.



## MISSOURI AND NEBRASKA'S

### Pony Express Trail

The Pony Express, which only lasted from April 1860 until October 1861, became part of Western lore almost immediately after its inception and remains one of the more popular eras (short-lived as it was) in Western frontier history. A great way to experience the heritage of the horse-delivered mail route is to travel the Pony Express National Historic Trail, starting at its home station in St. Joseph, Missouri, and tracing it across northern Missouri and Nebraska to Scottsbluff and Gering, Nebraska. The more time you have the better to enjoy the scenic drive on local, state and U.S. highways rather than on the interstates. Travelers who have more time can consider following the historic trail route all the way across Wyoming, Utah, Nevada and California to its final station in San Francisco.

**Mileage:** 574 miles

**Time:** Five to seven days, but if you have a month, follow the trail all the way to California and take as many U.S. and state highways as possible.



Exhibits at the Patee House Museum and Jesse James Home tell the rich and varied history of John Patée's 1858 hotel, the Pony Express and Jesse James, who was killed in the adjacent house on April 3, 1882.

- COURTESY ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI, CVB -

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Heritage travelers venturing out on the Pony Express National Historic Trail should begin their road trip at the Pony Express National Museum in St. Joseph, Missouri.

- COURTESY MISSOURI TOURISM -



Rock Creek Station State Historical Park, southeast of Fairbury, Nebraska, is a living history center along the Oregon and Pony Express National Historic trails. James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok (left) was just a stockboy working at the Pony Express Station when he killed Dave McCanles in self-defense on July 12, 1861.

- PHOTO OF ROCK CREEK STATION STATE HISTORICAL PARK COURTESY NEBRASKA TOURISM/PHOTO OF WILD BILL HICKOK COURTESY TRUE WEST ARCHIVES -

## Nebraska

**Rock Creek Station State Historical Park:** Just southeast of Fairbury, the Rock Creek Pony Express Station was the site of James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok's infamous shootout with David McCanles. The park also preserves wagon ruts from the thousands of wagons that traveled the Oregon Trail back and forth across the country.



## BUCKET LIST

### Missouri

**St. Joseph:** Known best as the trailhead for the Pony Express, St. Joseph boasts an historic district that will inspire the imagination and remind visitors of the importance of Missouri's western frontier towns to American history. Start a tour at the Pony Express Museum, then take the time to visit the St. Joseph Museum, Patee House Museum, Jesse James Home, Robidoux Row Museum and Pony Express Monument. Book a room at the Whiskey Mansion Inn and stay for a long weekend.

## WYOMING'S OUTLAW TRAIL WITH BUTCH & SUNDANCE



### BUTCH CASSIDY

Robert Leroy Parker's (aka Butch Cassidy) purchase of a stolen horse for five dollars led to his conviction in 1894 and incarceration at the State Penitentiary in Laramie, Wyoming. (now the Wyoming Territorial Prison) Cassidy was pardoned on January 20, 1896.

### THE WILD BUNCH

After prison, Cassidy organized a gang of thieves known as the Cassidy Gang or the Wild Bunch. Newspapers named them the Hole-in-the-Wall Gang. Cassidy became the most successful outlaw of his era.

### WILCOX TRAIN ROBBERY

On June 2, 1899 at 2:15 a.m. six masked men flagged down the Union Pacific Overland Flyer near Wilcox station in Albany County near present Rock River, North of Laramie. They commandeered the train and blew open the safe with dynamite injuring the baggage man. The Cassidy gang was blamed labeling them as dangerous thieves terrorizing the West.



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**Kearney:** Follow U.S. 30 along the Platte River across the Cornhusker State to the former frontier outpost and book a room at one of the national chain hotels in town. Spend time at Fort Kearny State Historical Park built along the route of the Oregon Trail and Pony Express, The Archway Museum, Trails and Rails Museum and the G.W. Frank Museum of History and Culture.

**Gothenburg:** Founded by Swedish immigrants, Gothenburg is home to the Pony Express Station Museum in the town's Ehmen Park.

**North Platte:** A Pony Express and Oregon Trail town, North Platte's Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park was the showman's headquarters and showplace ranch. After a tour of the ranch, spend some time at the Golden Spike Tower and Visitor Center overlooking the Union Pacific's Bailey Yard, the largest railroad facility in the world.

**Scottsbluff and Gering:** Sister cities, the historic Scotts Bluff County communities welcome visitors following the historic Overland Trail and Pony Express trails across the country. Spend a few days touring Gering's Legacy of the Plains Museum, Wyobrasca Natural History Museum, Farm and Ranch Museum, Scottsbluff National Monument and Chimney Rock National Historic Site.

**Best Websites:** *VisitMo.com*, *VisitNebraska.com*, *NPS.com*

Scotts Bluff was a landmark for Native people and Western fur trappers, overland travelers, soldiers and settlers. Visitors to Scotts Bluff National Monument can learn how the geologic landmark was a beacon for Pony Express riders who followed the North Platte River on their cross-country mail route.

- COURTESY NPS.GOV -



## The Art of Edward Borein & E. W. "Bill" Gollings Summer 2020



E. W. Gollings, *Father DeSmet Learning the Headwaters*, 1928, oil



Edward Borein, *The Wild Bunch*, 1927, pen and ink with Chinese white



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**THE SOUTHERN  
ROUTE WEST:**

Fort Smith to El Paso

In 1858, two years before the opening of the northern route of the Pony Express, the first national overland mail service was established on a Southern route from St. Louis and Memphis to San Francisco. Soon known as the Butterfield Overland Mail Route, a major juncture of the two northern trunk lines met in Fort Smith, Arkansas, before the stages ventured across the border into the Indian Territory and the wilds of frontier Texas. In 1858, the Comanches still ruled much of the Southern Plains and the stagecoach-mail service's long ramble across the Lone Star State was protected by small companies of Texas Rangers and a series of Army infantry and mounted dragoon companies stationed in a long arc to El Paso. Today, the intrepid heritage traveler can enjoy a long, slow ride from Arkansas, across southeastern Oklahoma and Texas to El Paso, with numerous historic sites, parks and restored frontier forts to tarry at along the way. And, of course, they'll enjoy lots of good regional Texas BBQ and Mexican food on the route.

**Mileage:** 1,030 miles

**Time:** Minimum a week, but two weeks would allow time to tour historic forts, museums and appreciate great BBQ and Mexican food.

 **BUCKET LIST** 

**Arkansas**

**Fort Smith:** Book a room at the 1817 historic inn in the Fort Smith Belle Grove Historic District, and spend a few days exploring one of the oldest American cities west of the Mississippi. Don't miss the Bass Reeves statue, dedicated to the famous black deputy U.S. marshal, and spend a day or two touring the Fort Smith National Historic Site, including the barracks and Judge Isaac Parker's famous courtroom. A new attraction should open in the city in the fall: The U.S. Marshal Museum.

**Oklahoma**

**Fort Washita:** Built in 1842 as the southernmost American outpost before Texas was a state, the fort near Colbert's Ferry protected travelers along the national trail and mail route. Today the Chickasaw Nation maintains the historic site.



The Butterfield Overland Mail Company's famous southern route across the country started at stations in St. Louis, Missouri, and Memphis, Tennessee, and conjoined at Fort Smith, Arkansas, the federal gateway to the wide-open, mostly unsettled American Southwest. After the Civil War, deputy U.S. marshals and posses (inset) were responsible for keeping the peace in the Indian Territory and brought their prisoners back to be tried in Judge Isaac Parker's federal courtroom at the fort.

- FORT SMITH PHOTOS COURTESY NPS.GOV -

**Texas**

**Sherman:** The east Texas outpost was 205 miles from Fort Smith and a welcome sight for weary travelers. Take time to visit the Sherman Museum and the Texas Historical Marker near the site of the original stage station.

**Fort Belknap:** Built in 1851, and rebuilt near its original foundations in the 1930s, the fort is maintained as a museum near Newcastle. The isolated army base was home to the 2nd Cavalry when the stage line was in operation between 1858 and 1861.

**Fort Chadbourne:** The Army opened the post in 1852 to protect travelers and citizens living on the Texas frontier and it operated as a station for the Butterfield Overland Mail Company. Today, the fort is a Texas State Historical Site, with a visitor center, museum and six restored buildings.

**Fort Stockton:** Established in the spring of 1859 adjacent to Comanche Springs, Fort Stockton became a key post

on the southern plains of West Texas. Modern Fort Stockton is a great spot to stay for a long weekend and immerse in the local history. Schedule time to tour Historic Fort Stockton, the Annie Riggs Memorial Museum and the Mesa Vineyard & Tasting Room.

**Fort Davis:** Fort Davis National Historic Site is the best-preserved Texas frontier fort in the Lone Star State and offers living history events throughout the year. Stay at the Hotel Limpia and explore the area, including the towns of Pecos and Fort Stockton.



Fort Davis was a lonely outpost on the far edge of the Texas frontier when it was first built against the Davis Mountains in October 1854. Today, Fort Davis National Historic Site is a living history center where visitors can learn about the role of the Army, including the 9th Cavalry (inset), in protecting stage lines, overland travelers and frontier settlements during the Indian Wars of the southern plains.

- FORT DAVIS PHOTOS COURTESY NPS.GOV -

**Big Bend National Park:** Take a side trip via Alpine to one of America's treasures, Big Bend National Park. Book a room at the historic Chisos Mountains Lodge and explore the wonders of the isolated, rugged park.

**El Paso:** Book a room downtown at Hotel Paseo del Norte and enjoy the historic sites and hospitality of the unofficial capital of West Texas. Schedule time to tour San Elizario Historic District located along the Butterfield stage route, the El Paso Concordia Cemetery, the final resting place of John Wesley Hardin, and the El Paso Museum of History.

**Best Websites:** *Arkansas.com, TravelOK.com, VisitTexas.com, TPWD.Texas.gov, NPS.gov*



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## OKLAHOMA: American Indian Spirit Trail

Oklahoma is a state with a rich but complex history. Congress founded it as the Indian Territory as the resettlement home for Eastern and Southern tribes. After the Civil War the federal government continued to resettle Western tribes from all regions to the Southern Plains territory. Later, in 1890, the Oklahoma Territory was created and in 1907 Oklahoma became the 46th state. Today, the Sooner State has one of the largest American Indian populations in the country. For travelers interested in learning firsthand about Native tribes that call Oklahoma home today, the state has a series of excellent museums and Indian heritage centers to visit to learn about the First Nations. With the current pandemic all of the following facilities were closed at press time, so please contact each organization before making plans to visit.

**Mileage:** Flexible

**Time:** Three to seven days; Oklahoma's American Indian heritage can be explored in a series of trips to the state's top cities, museums and Indian Heritage Centers.



Tribal centers across the state of Oklahoma remained closed during the coronavirus pandemic of 2020. As soon as the COVID-19 public gathering regulations are lifted, the Chickasaw Cultural Center in Sulphur, Oklahoma, will open to visitors who will learn about the tribe's history.

— COURTESY CHICKASAW TRIBAL CENTER —

Sculpted by American-born artist James Earle Fraser, *The End of the Trail* statue is a centerpiece of the internationally acclaimed art and history exhibitions at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Center. Museum visitors will be immersed in the history of the conflicts and challenges that American Indians, including the Comanche people and their leader Quanah Parker (inset), endured to survive in the Indian Territory.

— COURTESY NATIONAL COWBOY & WESTERN HERITAGE MUSEUM —

## BUCKET LIST

**Durant:** [ChoctawNation.com](http://ChoctawNation.com)

**Muskogee:** [FiveTribes.org](http://FiveTribes.org)

**Oklahoma City:** The state capital is home to the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, Oklahoma History Center and Oklahoma Hall of Fame. The state's economic, cultural and political hub is a great place to start a week-long tour of the Sooner State.

**Okmulgee:** [CreekCulturalCenter.com](http://CreekCulturalCenter.com)

**Ponca City:** [StandingBearPark.com](http://StandingBearPark.com) (Ponca Tribe)

**Spiro:** Spiro Mounds Archaeological Center, [OKHistory.org](http://OKHistory.org)

**Sallisaw:** Sequoyah's Cabin, [VisitCherokeeNation.com](http://VisitCherokeeNation.com)

**Sulphur:** [ChickasawCulturalCenter.org](http://ChickasawCulturalCenter.org)

**Tahlequah:** [CherokeeHeritageCenter.org](http://CherokeeHeritageCenter.org)

**Tulsa:** Located in the state's second largest city, the Gilcrease Museum has one of the finest American Indian history and Western art collections in the nation. Schedule at least a long weekend to explore Tulsa.

**Wewoka:** [SeminoleNationMuseum.org](http://SeminoleNationMuseum.org)

**Best Website:** [TravelOk.com](http://TravelOk.com) has a full guide to American Indian attractions in the state.



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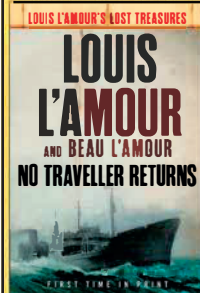
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# Well-Heeled, Bedraggled and Badged



In 1914, Tom Mix starred in William N. Selig's two-reel Western, *The Moving Picture Cowboy*. From 1910 to 1915, Mix made 170 silent films for Selig Polyscope, many of them on location in Prescott and Yavapai County, Arizona.

— COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS —

## Was Tom Mix ever a real lawman?

*Brian Mister*  
London, United Kingdom

Tom Mix's agent conjured up a colorful but fake biography of the movie star, claiming he was a deputy U.S. Marshal and a Texas Ranger. He was neither.

Tom was a Pennsylvania native who learned to ride at an early age. In 1898, he enlisted in the military during the Spanish-American War but never saw action and was not a Rough Rider. Later, he found work with the *101 Ranch Wild West Show* where he showed his horsemanship and shooting skills. He then moved to films and became one of the greatest cowboy stars in the early years of Hollywood.



## Ask The Marshall

BY MARSHALL TRIMBLE

Marshall Trimble is Arizona's official historian and vice president of the Wild West History Association. His latest book is *Arizona Oddities: Land of Anomalies and Tamales*; History Press, 2018. If you have a question, write: Ask the Marshall, P.O. Box 8008, Cave Creek, AZ 85327 or e-mail him at [marshall.trimble@scottsdalecc.edu](mailto:marshall.trimble@scottsdalecc.edu). Please always include your name, city and state.

## How did people sleep on long stagecoach journeys?

*Lauren Schlun*  
Zurich, Switzerland

The truth is, they didn't get much sleep. It was a crowded, bumpy and miserable ride, and the passengers had to sleep sitting up in their seats. The transcontinental stagecoaches ran 24/7 and the trip took about 25 days, so you can imagine how bedraggled the passengers were when they reached their destination. One could opt to get off at a station and wait for the next stage—and maybe catch a nap—but there was always the chance there wouldn't be room.



Stage passengers would have endured 12 days of travel in the United States Express overland Concord coach between Leavenworth, Kansas, and Denver, Colorado.

The passengers pictured here in Hays, Kansas, in 1867, are accompanied by a squad of Buffalo soldiers, possibly from nearby Fort Hays.

— PHOTO BY ALEXANDER GARDNER, COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS —

## What's the story about Billy the Kid killing Joe Grant?

*Art Weinreich*  
Phoenix, Arizona

Joe Grant was reputed to be a cocky, loud-mouthed cowboy. His fatal meeting with Billy happened on January 10, 1880, at Hargrove's Saloon in Fort Sumner,

New Mexico. Grant was drunk and obnoxious. He walked up to a Chisum cowhand named Jack Finan, who had a nice-looking ivory-handled pistol in his holster. Grant lifted it out and inserted his own in the holster. Finan didn't want to provoke Grant, so he didn't take offense.

Billy walked over to Grant, looked admiringly at Finan's pistol, lifted it out of Grant's holster saying, "That's a mighty nice-looking six-shooter you got." Billy spun the cylinder. He noticed there were three empty cartridges in the cylinder so he spun the cylinder again, making sure the hammer would fall on a spent cartridge.

Grant had already made it clear he was going to shoot somebody that night—and boasted that his target was John Chisum.

Billy told him the man he was planning to shoot was not John but his brother Jim.

Grant called him a liar; Billy turned and walked towards the door. Just as Billy figured, Grant pulled his pistol and when Billy heard the click of a hammer falling on an empty cartridge, he spun around and fired three quick shots.

The shooting of Joe Grant didn't get much coverage in the press. Robert Utley, in his fine biography of the Kid, says it was "...simply another saloon dispute that ended fatally."

## How did the term "heeled" come to mean carrying a weapon?

*Chris and O.J. Merrell*  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

It seems to have originated in the "sport" of cockfighting. A well-heeled rooster was provided with sharp spurs that could inflict maximum damage on its opponent. From this came the American frontier slang of being armed. And from that came the modern concept of being well-fixed in terms of money.

# ATTENTION READERS

Thanks to our advertisers for their support of True West and helping to preserve the history of the American Frontier. If you would like more information, please visit their websites shown below.



Virgil Earp moved into his parents' home in the San Bernardino County, California, railroad town of Colton in 1881 after he was nearly killed in an assassination attempt in Tombstone. In 1883, he was hired by the Southern Pacific Railroad to protect its interests against its competitor, the Santa Fe Railway, in a "frog war" that became known as "the battle of the crossing."

- COURTESY TRUE WEST ARCHIVES -

## What was Virgil Earp's law officer career after he left Tombstone?

**Ron Dalbey**  
Genoa, Nevada

In June 1886, Virgil opened Earp's Detective Agency in Colton, California. In July of the same year, he was elected constable of Colton and a year later he was elected city marshal. Virgil was reelected to that position in April 1888 and resigned in March 1889. Colton was not a wild town like other towns he'd kept the peace in, and perhaps Virgil wanted a little more action.

After a few years of wandering and trying different jobs, Earp was hired in January 1905 as deputy sheriff for Esmeralda County, Nevada. He was still in that position when he died that October.



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# What HISTORY HAS TAUGHT ME

**Growing up in Minnesota** birthed a love of Lake Superior agates, Indian arrowheads, the Dakota War of 1862, Grain Belt beer and Minnesota Twins baseball.

**Winters....**whether in Minnesota, Montana's Big Hole or Williston, North Dakota, are formidable, and you love or hate 'em. I mostly suffered them, and in January always preferred Arizona. Still do.

**My parents** introduced me to the American West. We were hearty camper travelers who prowled most of the Western national parks from Yellowstone and Glacier to Yosemite and the Grand Canyon, and all points and parks between.

**My first history mentor** was a devoted field historian and interpreter, B. William "Bill" Henry, Jr. He was the man who hired me into the National Park Service.

**The first national park I visited** was Badlands National Monument about 1954, where my dad posed me with an ancient-looking Indian—who was almost certainly Dewey Beard—at his tipi set up behind the park visitor center.

**My first posting as a park ranger** was at Fort Laramie National Historic Site in 1971. It was magical, whether wearing a flat-brimmed ranger hat this day or an old soldier uniform the next, and this in the steep of history spanning the fur trade, overland trail, pony express, Indian treaties, Spotted Tail, Crook and all those marvelous old buildings.

**My most remote posting** was the Big Hole National Battlefield in southwestern Montana, a somber Nez Perce War site by day but also featuring a glorious blue ribbon trout stream that some of us overworked in the afterhours.

**Marriage and family** are ultimately all that count, though pity my endlessly suffering girls, tormented as they were (or so they still claim) by seemingly nonstop visits to museums, forts and battlefields.

**The first time I visited Little Bighorn Battlefield** was on a trip to Yellowstone in about 1964. As a kid I was an obsessed Custer buff and the stop was mesmerizing almost to tears.

**If I had a moment with Crazy Horse**, I'd plead with him to go to that meeting with Crook, and that meeting in Washington with the President. And I'd caution him about trusting all those interpreters hovering about, especially Grouard.

**If I went fly-fishing with Gen. George Crook**, I'd nag the ever-quiet one for his version of the turnaround at the Rosebud Narrows in the late afternoon of June 17. Did he truly feel so helpless without his Crows and Shoshones, even when leading a thousand tested Regulars?



COURTESY CONNIE HEDREN

## PAUL HEDREN, SIOUX WAR HISTORIAN

Paul Hedren has led two lives. About the days working as a National Park Service historian and superintendent, he admits lucking into some remarkable experiences, including the arrival and dedication of Golden Spike National Historic Site's fully operational steam locomotives in 1979, and the reconstruction of Fort Union Trading Post in North Dakota in the mid-1980s. Since retiring in 2007, he has devoted his energies to history, writing of the 1870s in the northern plains. When not prowling the Black Hills or Sioux war landscapes, he and his wife, Connie, are comfortably at home in Omaha, Nebraska.

**Sitting Bull** was easily the greatest of the Lakota traditionalists, a charismatic spiritualist who clung to glories of the chase to the very day of his death.

**The Battle of Little Bighorn** sealed the traditionalist's fate. We know this, but when did they?

**My next book** presents the field dispatches of John Finerty, reporting Crook's summer campaign against the Sioux for the *Chicago Times*. Too many of us have assumed that Finerty so fully exhausted those letters and telegrams when preparing his 1890 book *War-Path and Bivouac* as to make the original pen work superfluous. Well, not so, and not even close.

**What has history taught me?** I live in the world of Custer, Crook, Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse. History tells me that there is much yet to explore in what some consider to be a timeworn tale. New sources, keen insights, and fresh connections abound. My horizon keeps expanding.



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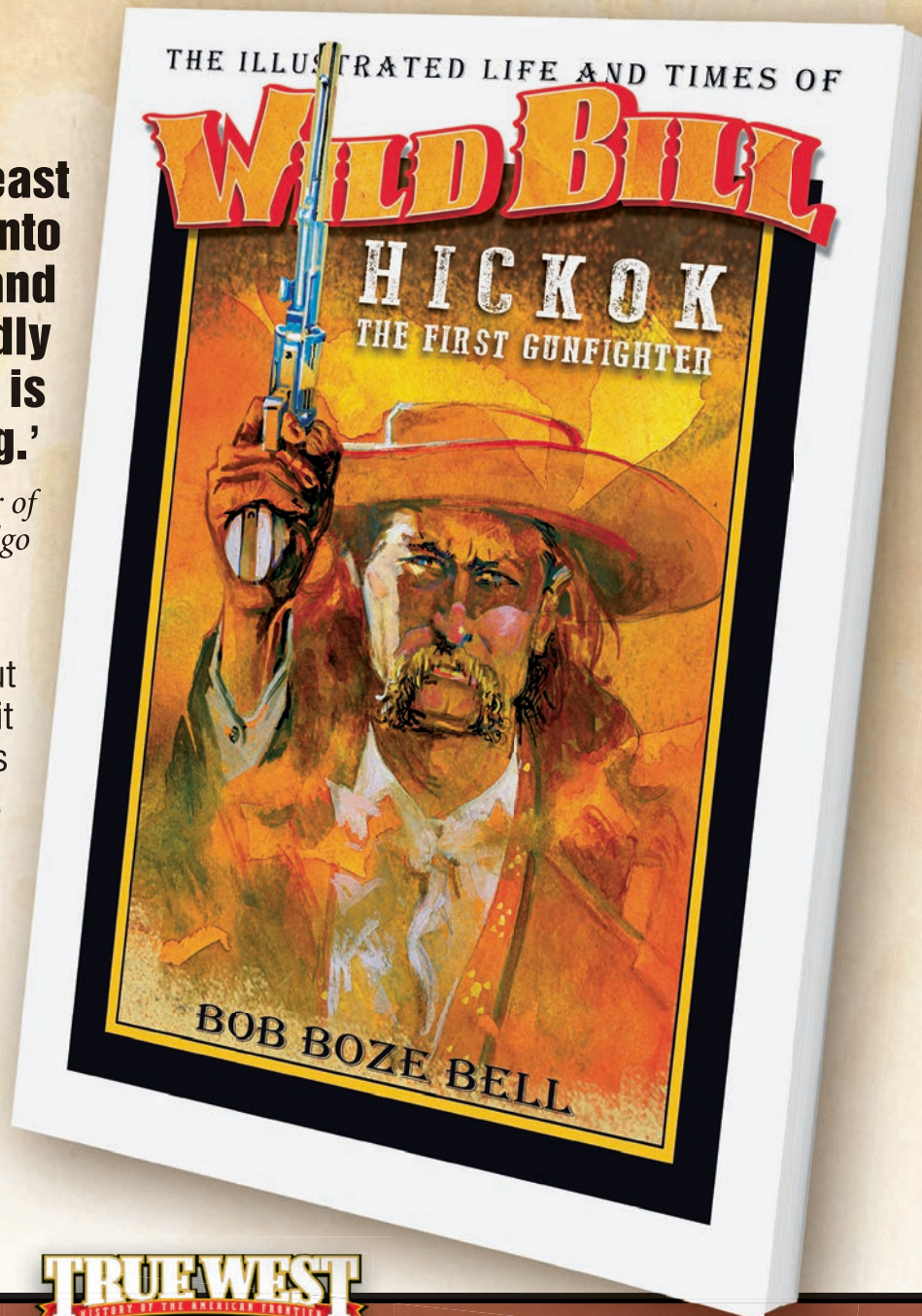
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