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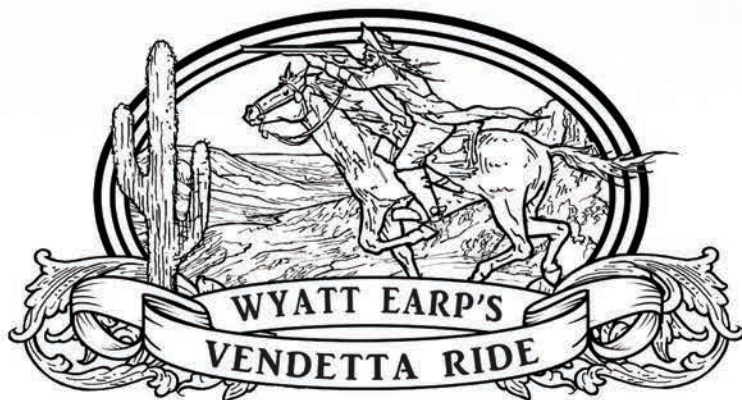
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On April 7, 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt addressed a crowd of enthusiastic supporters at the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas. A month after his inauguration for his second term as America's chief executive, Roosevelt barnstormed across Oklahoma and Texas en route to a Rough Riders reunion in San Antonio, where he organized the famous First Volunteer Cavalry Regiment for the Spanish-American War in the spring of 1898.



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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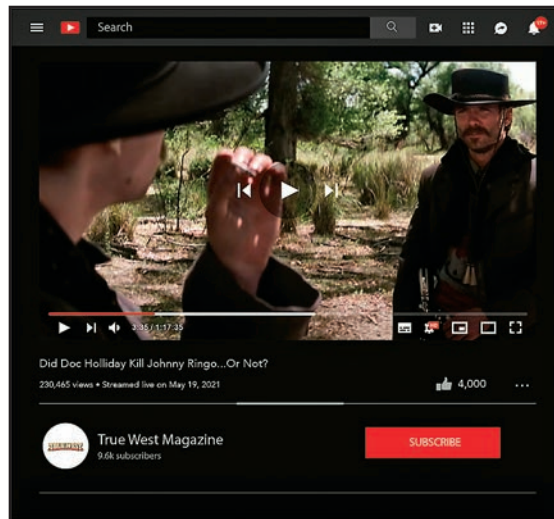
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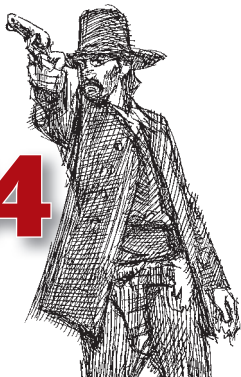


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- | | | | |
|-----------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| 6 | OPENING SHOT | 48 | RENEGADE ROADS |
| 10 | TRUTH BE KNOWN | 52 | FRONTIER FARE |
| 11 | TO THE POINT | 54 | WESTERN BOOKS |
| 12 | SHOOTING BACK | 58 | WESTERN MOVIES |
| 14 | OLD WEST SAVIORS | 77 | WESTERN ROUNDUP |
| 16 | INVESTIGATING HISTORY | 78 | ASK THE MARSHALL |
| 18 | COLLECTING THE WEST | 80 | WHAT HISTORY HAS TAUGHT ME |
| 21 | SHOOTING FROM THE HIP | | |

24



24 DID DOC KILL RINGO?

Once and for all, historians set the record straight on the tragic demise of the legendary gunfighter.

—By Bob Boze Bell

32 TOMBSTONE: ON THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR

Historians, actors and film critics weigh in on Kevin Jarre's original script—and whether it should be remade and finally get its due.

—By The Editors of True West



32

40 TAMER OF RATON PASS

"Uncle Dick" Wootton helped build a nation with his Santa Fe Trail toll road.

—By Melody Groves

40



62 WHERE HISTORY HAPPENS

Vigilant stewards keep the Old West alive in these top ten towns.

—By Peter Corbett



44



62



Cover design by Dan Harshberger

Photo Courtesy Buena Vista Pictures

COMPILED BY THE EDITORS OF *TRUE WEST*

Old Vaquero Saying

“Ain’t nothin’ like ridin’ a fine horse in new country.”



Quotes

“Whatever is their fortune, good or bad, the leader is the person on whom the praise or blame falls.”

—James Beckwourth

“You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.”

—Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln, Springfield, Illinois, circa 1846–47

Nicholas Shepherd, Library of Congress

“Advice is like snow—the softer it falls, the longer it dwells upon, and the deeper it sinks into the mind.”

—Samuel Taylor Coleridge

“We may brave human laws, but we cannot resist natural ones.”

—Jules Verne

“All you need for happiness is a good gun, a good horse and a good wife.”

—Daniel Boone

“Women, like men, should try to do the impossible. And when they fail, their failure should be a challenge to others.”

—Amelia Earhart

“It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade.”

—Charles Dickens

“The clearest way into the Universe is through a forest wilderness.”

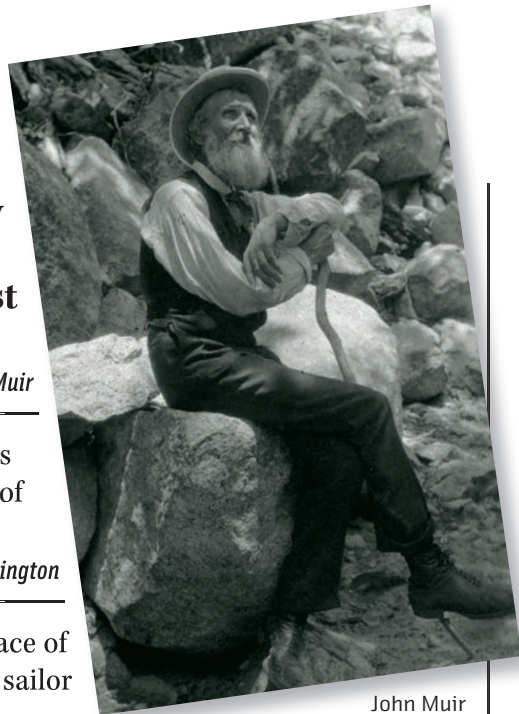
—John Muir

“Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth.”

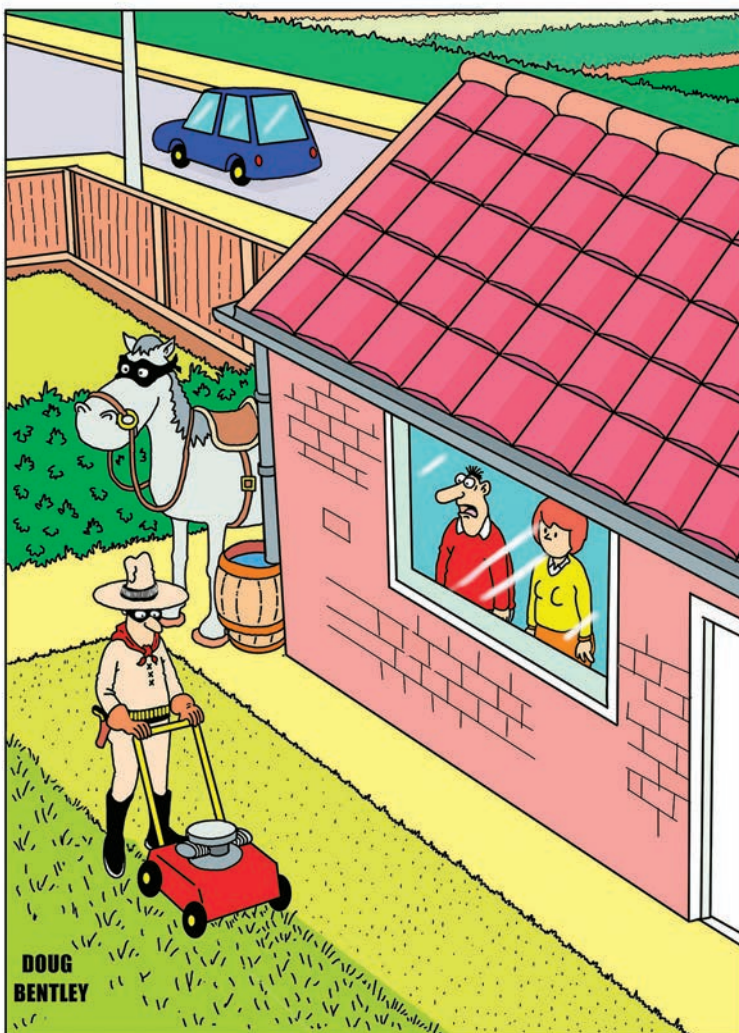
—George Washington

“A woman knows the face of the man she loves as a sailor knows the open sea.”

—Honoré de Balzac



John Muir
True West Archives



CartoonStock.com

“No one knows his identity. He just turns up, cuts your grass, then departs without leaving his name. They call him the Lawn Ranger.”

Tombstone Redux

Let's find someone to refilm Kevin Jarre's original script and complete his dream.

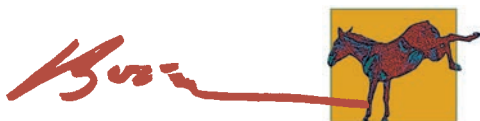
Thanks to Jeff Morey, the historical consultant on *Tombstone* I got to visit on-set on June 9, 1993. What I saw impressed me: great hats and costuming (the best I have ever seen), all chosen by Kevin Jarre.

Kevin Jarre's script is the best Wyatt Earp script in terms of historical references (virtually every scene has a historical reference). The script is also the most erudite Western ever, channeling the Bible, Shakespeare, Latin and Stephen-Stinking-Foster. The script also shows how gray the lines were between the Cowboys and the Earps. For example, in one scene, Wyatt rides into the Cowboys' camp looking for his stolen horse. This is taken right from the historical record. Earp did, in fact, have a horse stolen by Billy Clanton, and Wyatt rode to Charleston looking for it, ran into the young Clanton, who basically told the gambler he hoped he had more horses to steal. In Jarre's script, he has Earp saying to Billy Clanton (Thomas Hayden Church): "Look, kid, I know what it's like, I was a kid, too. Even stole a horse once."

This is also straight from the historical record where a young Wyatt was arrested for stealing a horse, and he jumped bail. Kevin Costner's three-hour-long opus *Wyatt Earp* takes 20 minutes to tell this story, and Jarre nailed the entire backstory in one line of dialogue!

At the end of this sequence, Curly Bill (Powers Booth) arrives and commands Billy to give back Earp's horse. The outlaw leader and Wyatt then ride off together and have a conversation where Earp asks Curly to go easy on Tombstone because his brother Virgil is now the city marshal. After some bantering, Curly Bill says, "We're gonna get along fine." None of this made it into the final film.

In this issue, we have marshaled everyone we could find to, first of all, pay homage to Kevin Jarre's great script and also to determine just what was lost and what could be gained by dusting it off and giving it another go. Special thanks to Dr. Gary Roberts, Roy Young, John Farkis, Jim Anderson, Mark Boardman, Casey Tefertiller, John Boessenecker and Jeff Morey for their insights and research. As Earp historian Allen Barra puts it, "Anyone in Hollywood listening?"



For a behind-the-scenes look at running this magazine, check out BBB's daily blog at TWMag.com



"Let's Get It On, Lunger"

Several years ago, in an interview, Michael Biehn told me he has been in bigger movies (*The Abyss*, *The Terminator* and *The Rock*, to name just a few) but that he gets much more recognition from the public for his role as Johnny Ringo in *Tombstone*. Recently, Biehn moved his family to Bisbee, Arizona, which is not far from the events featured in the classic film. He is seen here on the front porch of their home in the historic mining village. That's Michael with his son, Dashiell King Biehn, 6, and his wife, Jennifer Blanc Biehn.

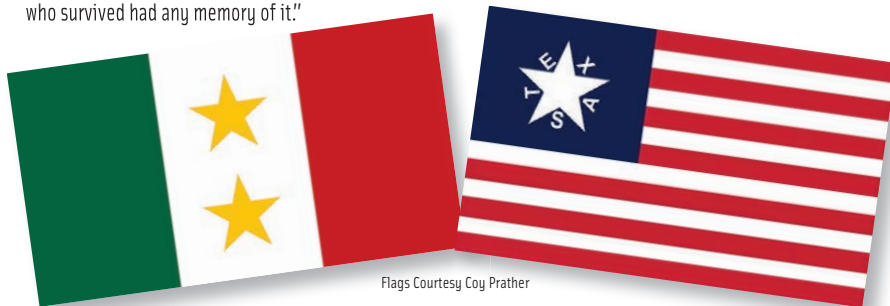
Michael Biehn as Johnny Ringo Courtesy Buena Vista Pictures / Biehn Family Photo Courtesy Michael Biehn



OUR READERS REMIND US OF THE VARIABLES AND VAGARIES OF HISTORIC TRUTHS, “WELL-ESTABLISHED” FACTS, HEADLINES AND HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS.

FLAGS OVER THE ALAMO

In the November 2021 “Ask the Marshall,” Marshall Trimble was asked the question by Robert S. Deleon of Morgantown, West Virginia, “What flag was flown by the defenders of the Alamo in March 1836?” Marshall answered: “If you want to believe the many movies Hollywood and others have produced about the Alamo, it was the Mexican tricolor of red, white and green modified by having “1824” sewn into the white stripe. There is no evidence such a flag ever flew over the Alamo. In fact, if there was a Texan battle flag at the Alamo, none of those who survived had any memory of it.”



Flags Courtesy Coy Prather

Thanks to one of our readers, Texas historian **Coy Prather** from **Anderson County, Texas**, we learned the truth—that there were actually two flags at the Battle of the Alamo in March 1836, and neither was the “1824” Hollywood version.

Which flag or flags flew during the siege over the Alamo in 1836? An article by Robert Mayberry Jr. from his book, *Two Flags* and printed in the *Texas Monthly*, March 2002, issue:

“Two flags flew over the Alamo during the famous 1836 siege. Neither was a Mexican tricolor with ‘1824’ inscribed. The presence of such a flag is pure myth, and its description was not based on any eyewitness account. The story of the 1824 flag originated in 1860 as conjecture that the Texans were fighting to restore the tenets of the Mexican Constitution of 1824.

“This story of the 1824 flag was repeated so many times that it became a matter of faith and assumed an undeserved place in the mythology of Texas. In reality, the defenders of the Alamo wanted no part of 1824. Eyewitnesses do, however, report a green, white and red Mexican tricolor at the Alamo. But it had two stars, one for Texas and one for Coahuila, not 1824. This flag emphasizing the union of Texas with Mexico made only a brief appearance and probably was associated with the Tejanos of the Texian garrison. The fort’s main flag, the one [William B.] Travis reported ‘still waves proudly from the walls’ in his February 24 message ‘To the people of Texas and all Americans in the world’ resembled not the flag of the Mexican Republic but that of the American one.

“A preponderance of contemporary evidence suggests the flag of the Alamo had a field of thirteen red and white stripes like the Stars and Stripes of the United States, but in the canton [the square or rectangle in the upper hoist or the rectangle closest to the pole] was the lone star and between each point a letter of the word ‘Texas.’ This was a flag the Anglo-Celtic defenders of the Alamo would have died for.”

CHAOS IN NOME

Really enjoyed your great but brief introduction to the photos by Frank Downs [December 2021 issue]. This era in Western history is underreported and would make a great book.

—Allen Fossenkemper
Fountain Hills, Arizona

Thank you. We have received some wonderful feedback on the feature on Frank Downs’ photographs of Nome, Alaska. Here is another remarkable photo that the New England prospector took of Nome’s Front Street at midnight on June 21, 1900. —SR



Courtesy NYPL Digital Collections

RATTLESNAKE-ON-LEGS

I enjoyed Henry C. Parke’s December 2021 article “Dern’d If I Do” on Bruce Dern, a consummate actor and my favorite rattlesnake-on-legs. It was gratifying to learn this true professional remains active and vibrant. Thanks for another entertaining issue.

—Loren D. Estleman
Whitmore Lake, Michigan



Bruce Dern (center) reveled in his role as the reviled Long Hair opposite John Wayne as Wil Anderson in *The Cowboys* (1972).

Courtesy Warner Bros

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL BOOKSTORE

I enjoyed your recent “Best of the West 2022: Western Books.” I would like to suggest a bookstore for your award for next year. Coas Bookstore, here in Las Cruces, New Mexico, has been around for more than 40 years and boasts two storefronts and over 500,000 books, including a fine collection of Western titles and important Western authors such as Rhodes, Dobi and others. It wouldn’t be a stretch to say that the store is the hub of the rejuvenated downtown and is very supportive of local authors like myself. In fact, between Las Cruces and Mesilla, we have four bookstores that support local authors.

—Mary Armstrong
Las Cruces, New Mexico

Thank you! We at True West love learning about local bookstores. I will make a point to visit Coas Bookstore the next time I am in Las Cruces. I encourage our readers to send us information about their best local bookstores, the cornerstones of communities keeping the Old West alive. —SR

CORRECTION

On page 64 of the December 2021 issue, the caption referring to the 50th anniversary of Bruce Dern’s film *The Cowboys* should have read “half a century later,” not half a decade later.



Sheridan
COUNTY, WYOMING, USA.

1. ROAD TRIPPING THE ICONIC BIGHORN MOUNTAINS 2. A NIGHT UNDER THE STARS WITH SHERIDAN TENT & AWNING IN THE NORTHERN BIGHORNS 3. SIBLEY LAKE RECREATION AREA 4. AN EVENING PADDLING PARK RESERVOIR 5. EPIC EXPERIENCES ON HORSEBACK WITH DOUBLE RAFTER CATTLE DRIVES 6. STEAMBOAT POINT AT SUNSET FROM THE BIGHORN SCENIC BYWAY

Wyoming was purpose-built for social distancing. There are more deer and antelope than people 'round these parts, and you won't hear many folks complain about that. We've all got our own spaces, but we love to explore the public ones we share, and we don't mind sharing some of them with strangers. After all, our Bighorn backyard is a wild, untamed realm of endless adventure. With our new streaming webseries titled *The Backyard*, we hope to show everyone beyond the borders of Wyoming what makes the great outdoors special, and why the Bighorns are the ultimate playground for those who choose to go outside and play. In this wild time of social distancing, distrust, and disbelief, we believe that the mountains can bring us closer together, and that there is no place in the world more authentic. Is there a more spectacular experience than backpacking into a part of the Bighorn National Forest

that you have never seen before? We. Think. Not. Each and every trip into these mountains offers blissful solitude, and a respite from the hustle of everyday life. We have worked hard to present some of our backyard's most epic hikes, legendary attractions, national historic landmarks, and much more. With two feet and a heartbeat we hiked and backpacked into uncharted territory in the Bighorn National Forest and shared the stories of some of the most iconic locations in the region. We took a step back into history and experienced Ernest Hemingway's Wyoming firsthand. We kayaked pristine rivers, paraglided from perilous peaks, sussed out outlaw history, and stargazed at the brightest night skies in America. Yeah, there is a metaphor tucked in there somewhere. It was only a matter of time before the clouds broke over 2020. We hope that you have had a chance to see some of these episodes, and that you will continue to celebrate Sheridan County with us as we look ahead to producing Season 2. This time, we plan on

delving deep into centuries of Indian storytelling, diving headlong into local craft culture, and touching the heart of Sheridan's creative community. We also know that it has never been more important to know that you will be safe when you explore Bighorn Mountain Country. While Wyoming is the perfect place for socially-distanced escapes, we will do what we can to keep you informed, and up to date, on any COVID-19 related news and information, travel rules or restrictions, or local health and safety advisories. We believe that the road to recovery from this pandemic begins right here in *The Backyard*, so you can count on us to provide you with information that matters. We hope that you will stay safe, and that our local businesses will continue to benefit by welcoming you to our community. For more information, please visit us at www.sheridanwyoming.org

EXPLORE BIGHORN MOUNTAIN COUNTRY

The world comes out west expecting to see cowboys driving horses through the streets of downtown; pronghorn butting heads on windswept bluffs; clouds encircling the towering pinnacles of the Cloud Peak Wilderness; and endless expanses of wild, open country. These are some of the fibers that have been stitched together over time to create the patchwork quilt of Sheridan County's identity, each part and parcel to the Wyoming experience. Toss in a historic downtown district, with western allure, hospitality and good graces to spare; a vibrant art scene; bombastic craft culture; a robust festival and events calendar; and living history on every corner, and you have a Wyoming experience unlike anything you could have ever imagined. This is Sheridan County, the beating heart of Bighorn Mountain Country.



BY JANA BOMMERSBACH

Native History Celebrated Large

Only months old, the First Americans Museum in Oklahoma City is dedicated to truth-telling.



The First Americans Museum's glass edifice is made of 800 panes of glass and houses the Hall of the People. Cherokee artists Demos Glass and Bill Glass Jr.'s *Touch to Above* welcomes visitors at the heritage center's entrance.

All Images Courtesy First Americans Museum

It was once called Indian Territory, a dumping ground as tribe after tribe was forced off their Eastern lands and settled in this Western spot. When it found a name, two Choctaw words were used, meaning Red People: *Okla* and *Homma*.

In 1907 it became the 46th state, and in 2021, it proudly proclaimed its Native history with

the opening of the First Americans Museum in Oklahoma City.

"One place, many nations," it declares, as it presents the collective history of the 39 distinct Native Nations in the state today. Outside of Alaska, Oklahoma has the highest relative population percentage of Indigenous people based on state population.

"Here is where you'll hear authentic voices," says Ginny Underwood, a Comanche who is marketing director at the museum. "You hear 'we and us' not 'they and them.'"

The museum is a 30-year-old dream, first promoted by State Sen. Kelly Haney, a former chief of the Seminole Nation in the late 1990s, who sponsored legislation to create a museum.



For 27 years the 39 tribes of Oklahoma worked together to create the First Americans Museum.

Eventually a site was chosen—Oil Field No. 1, which once supplied 60 percent of the oil for the U.S., but had dried up and now was a dump. The wells had to be capped and the land brought back. That took years, but in 2005, there was a ground blessing to heal the space, and in 2006, construction began on the museum. COVID certainly didn't help, but in September of 2021, the First Americans Museum opened in a striking building that is a "giant cosmological clock"—at the spring and fall equinox, the sun enters from the front entrance gate.

Underwood is proud that 80 percent of the museum's staff, and 100 percent of its curators, are Natives. "The love and care we're giving to objects here is really fantastic."

"We can't go into depth on all the 39 nations, but we can focus on our shared experiences," she adds. "Each nation has its distinct culture and language—it would be like telling the stories of all European nations in one museum."

Among the exhibits are 140 objects on loan from the Smithsonian, which let each Nation select three objects. One of the curators was



"WINIKO: Life of an Object, Selections from the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian" is one of the main exhibits curated by the museum with the 39 Oklahoma tribes for the new Oklahoma City heritage center.

able to link some of the objects back to their families of origin still living in Oklahoma.

There's also a restaurant that offers indigenous cuisine and a shop with one-of-a-kind work by Indian artists.

Underwood notes that only four tribes were indigenous to the area—another four roamed through it regularly—but all the rest ended up here by America's "Indian Removal" policy. At one point, many expected these tribes to become extinct, so their survival is celebrated by the museum.

The museum sees its responsibility is to "educate the broader public and foster truth-telling." It wants everyone to see the "unique culture, diversity, history, contributions and resilience of the First American Nations in Oklahoma today." ✦

Jana Bombersbach 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*.

BY MARK BOARDMAN

The Lone Star Myth of John Ringo

His time in Texas was not what it's been cracked up to be.

On August 19, 1875, a rider—or maybe riders—approached the Bader ranch in Mason County, Texas. He went out to the fields, where Karl “Charlie” Bader was working the land. Exactly what happened is not known, but it’s believed the rider took little time to plug Charlie, who dropped dead on the spot.

Most reports agree: the rider was Scott Cooley, seeking revenge for the killing of a friend a few weeks earlier. But he made a mistake; his target was Charlie Bader’s older brother Peter (who would get his a bit later).

Several modern reports suggest that Cooley was accompanied by John Ringo, who would go on to great fame in southeast Arizona. And there may have been others involved. But Ringo biographer David Johnson takes issue with that.

In his book *John Ringo*, Johnson digs into the contemporary stories of the killing. None mention Ringo. And none agree on who—if anyone—the additional riders might have been.

Just as important: there is no evidence that Cooley and Ringo joined up until a month later. At that point, they were a dangerous duo (okay, others rode with them) indeed. But Johnson isn’t certain that Scott and John even knew each other in August.

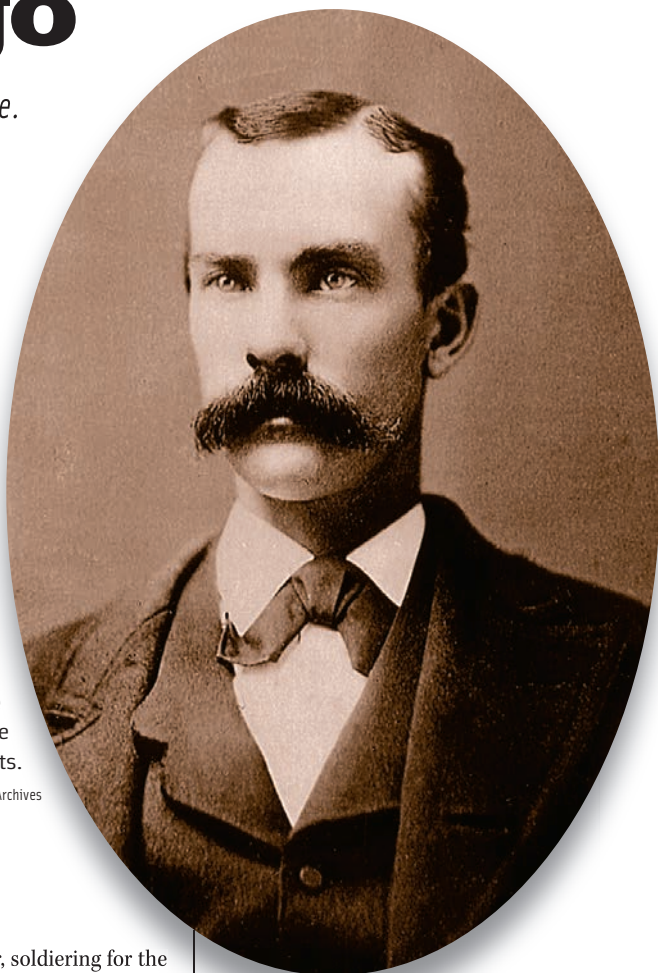
Finally, while many chroniclers say the Bader shooting was part of the infamous Mason County “Hoo Doo War,” Johnson challenges that. His assertion is that Cooley was taking his pound of flesh to avenge a friend; the feud had nothing to do with it.

Scott Cooley likely killed Charlie Bader all by himself. It fits with his solo revenge killing of Mason County Deputy John Worley nine days earlier. Bader wasn’t Ringo’s first gun notch.

But Ringo would rectify that on September 25. He and a man identified only as Williams rode to the home of Jim Cheyney, north of the town of Mason. By this time, Ringo and Cooley

Outlaw John Ringo, whose rivalry with Doc Holliday and his mysterious death in Cochise County are still being debated (see page 24), spent a year in jail awaiting trial for the killing of Jim Cheyney in Mason County, Texas, in 1876–77. He was never tried or convicted because a courthouse fire burned most of the court documents.

True West Archives



had taken sides in the war, soldiering for the Americans in their fight with German immigrants. Cheyney was an enemy who had led two of their friends into a fatal ambush. When Ringo and Williams rode up to his house, Cheyney—on the front porch—invited the men to have breakfast with him. He then washed his face and hands in preparation for the meal. While he was drying off his face, Ringo and his confederate gunned down Cheyney.

Ringo was eventually arrested in the killing and spent much of 1876 and 1877 in jail. For at least part of the time, gunman John Wesley Hardin was held under the same roof. By that time, people wanted to brush the more-or-less finished Mason County War under the rug and forget about it. And a courthouse fire had destroyed many of the original documents in the cases against Ringo. Charges against him

were dismissed in 1878. And after a brief period, John moved on to Arizona Territory, where he would become the stuff of legend.

That legend, of course, tells us of a man who was one of the deadliest pistoleers in the West. It points to his time in Texas, where he dispatched many a man with his quick draw and unerring aim. It just didn’t happen that way. Ringo didn’t participate in one of the killings attributed to him. And the other...he shot an unarmed man who had a towel over his face.

“When the legend becomes fact, print the legend.” John Ringo, especially his time in Texas, epitomizes that saying.

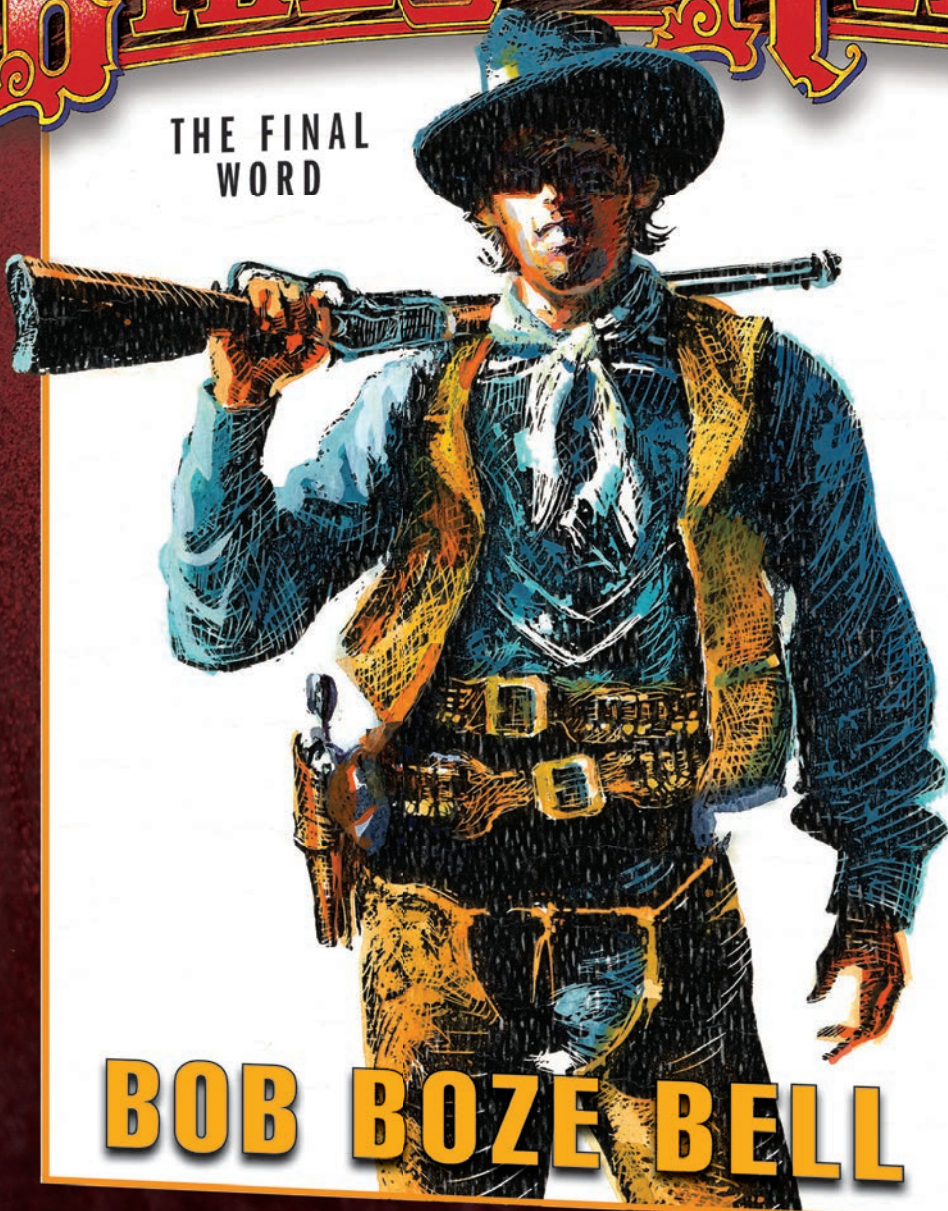


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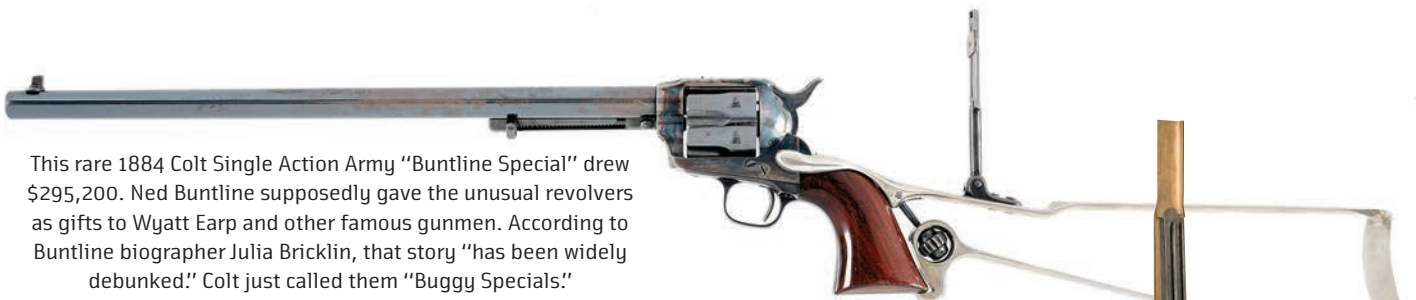
BY STEVE FRIESEN

Colt Gallops Away with Big Money at Auctions

Morphy and Rock Island prove collectors still love the classic American firearms.

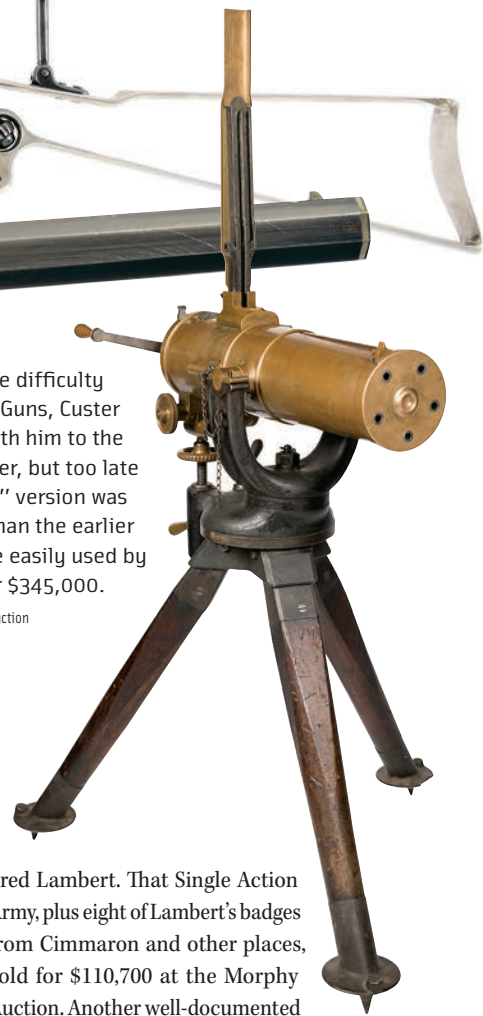
This rare 1884 Colt Single Action Army "Buntline Special" drew \$295,200. Ned Buntline supposedly gave the unusual revolvers as gifts to Wyatt Earp and other famous gunmen. According to Buntline biographer Julia Bricklin, that story "has been widely debunked." Colt just called them "Buggy Specials."

Courtesy Morphy Auctions



Largely because of the difficulty in transporting Gatling Guns, Custer refused to take them with him to the Little Big Horn. A year later, but too late for Custer, this "Bulldog" version was released; it was lighter than the earlier models and could be more easily used by the cavalry. It sold for \$345,000.

Courtesy Rock Island Auction



Manufactured in Paterson, New Jersey, and popular in Texas, this Texas Paterson #5 Revolver, made by Samuel Colt before he established his Colt Patent Fire-Arms Manufacturing Company, fetched \$431,250.

Courtesy Rock Island Auction



Samuel Colt patented his first revolver in 1835, and in 1855 he started the company that made him famous...and rich. Colt's Patent Fire-Arms Manufacturing Company produced other firearms, but it was the revolvers that established the Colt name's place in Western history. Those revolvers pulled in big money at both the Morphy Extraordinary Firearms Auction on November 17 and 18 and the Rock Island Premier Firearms Auction from December 3 to 5.

At 387 lots, Colt eclipsed even Winchester in sheer numbers at the Rock Island Auction. At the Morphy Auction, it was Colt's "Buntline Special," with its long barrel and detachable metal stock, that obtained top dollar at \$295,200. The top-selling Colt at the Rock Island Auction, selling at \$431,250, was a #5 Revolver. Manufactured in

Paterson, New Jersey, and popular with the Texas Rangers, it was called the Texas Paterson revolver. The #5 was manufactured in small quantities between 1838 and 1840, just as Colt was getting his start.

Another high-ticket Colt at the Rock Island Auction was not a revolver at all but an 1877 "Bulldog" Gatling Gun with tripod and other accessories for \$345,000. Gatling Guns were the first commercially successful machine guns and were used occasionally in the West. Colt later produced a Thompson Machine Gun in 1921, one of which sold at the Morphy Auction for \$101,425.

There were plenty of Colt Single Action Army and Navy revolvers sold at both auctions. One of those Colt revolvers, with impeccable provenance, belonged to New Mexico lawman

Fred Lambert. That Single Action Army, plus eight of Lambert's badges from Cimmaron and other places, sold for \$110,700 at the Morphy Auction. Another well-documented Colt Model 1860 Army went for \$138,000 at the Rock Island Auction. It had belonged to Confederate Maj. William Connor, who was killed at Gettysburg. The sale prices of these and other Colt firearms at both auctions demonstrate the ongoing legacy of Samuel Colt among collectors.



Steve Friesen comes to "Collecting the West" with over 40 years of experience in collecting for museums, including evaluating and acquiring artifacts from the American West.



New Mexico lawman Fred Lambert purchased this Colt Single Action Army in 1907 and carried it throughout the rest of his career. The inscription on the revolver's backstrap, and his badges that were sold with it, document that career. The Lambert items sold for \$110,700.

Courtesy Morphy Auctions



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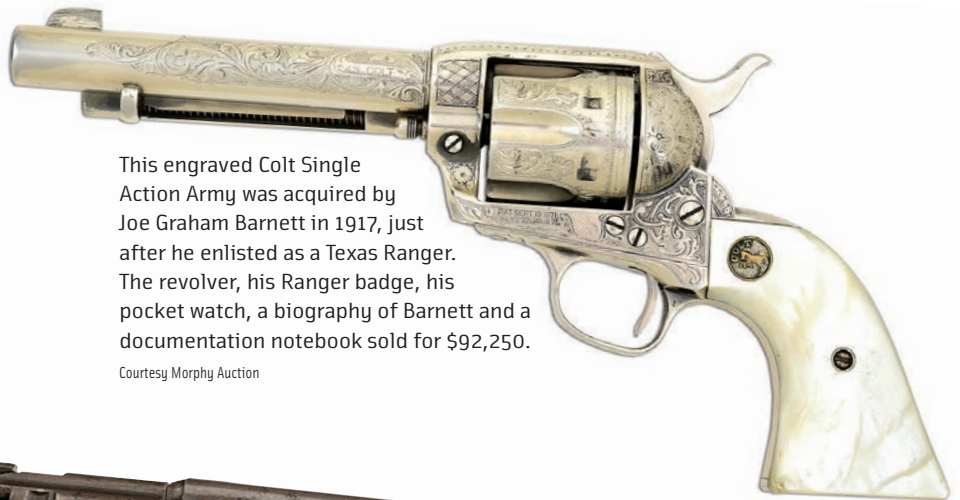
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Both auctions featured other outstanding items. A ca. 1880 Winchester cartridge board (above right) in excellent condition went for \$73,800, while a ca. 1869 board from the United States Cartridge Company (above) brought \$43,125.

Winchester Cartridge Board Courtesy of Morphy Auctions/
United States Cartridge Board Courtesy of Rock Island Auction



This engraved Colt Single Action Army was acquired by Joe Graham Barnett in 1917, just after he enlisted as a Texas Ranger. The revolver, his Ranger badge, his pocket watch, a biography of Barnett and a documentation notebook sold for \$92,250.

Courtesy Morphy Auction



Captain William G. Connor's Model 1860 Army revolver, with its detachable shoulder stock, brought \$138,000. Connor may have been carrying it when he died at the battle of Gettysburg.

Courtesy Rock Island Auction

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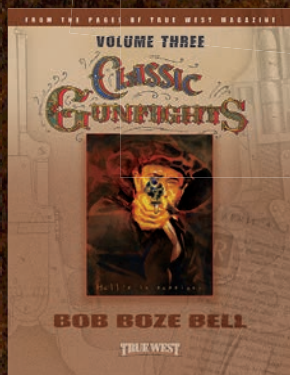
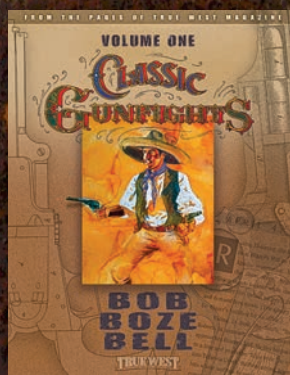
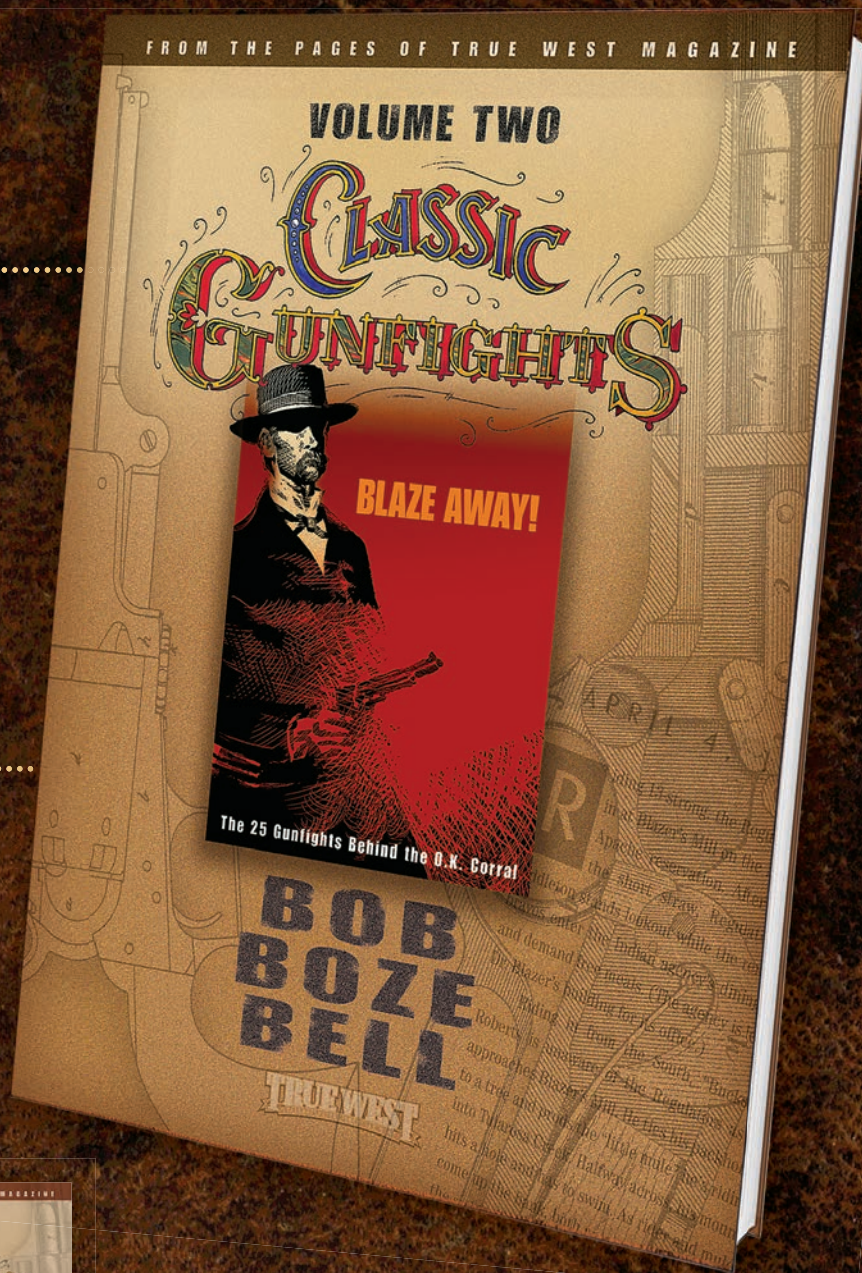
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TRUE WEST
A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN WEST

BY PHIL SPANGENBERGER

My Top Ten Favorite Movie Moments

True West's Firearms Editor applauds authenticity.

Western movies are made for entertainment, and we must consider them strictly as such, and not as documentaries. And yet some oaters contain authentic moments, such as moving scenes that reveal a genuine feel for the period of the story, or perhaps showing the correct costuming, fire-arms, props and more. These additions help give a horse opera a more realistic feel of the Old Frontier. Despite some historical anachronisms, like using the wrong guns, clothing, saddlery and other errors, these are some of my favorite moments and imagery from Westerns of the 1920-1970 era, the "Golden Age of Hollywood."

1. *The Big Trail* (1930): Arguably the closest look at what a pre-Civil War wagon-train looked like that you'll ever see. Spectacular scenery, the bustling wagon camp, lowering wagons and oxen teams over the cliff, are like period daguerreotypes in action. Interestingly, decades ago the Kansas State Historical Society uncovered some still photos from this film, and assumed they were period images of an 1840s wagon train.

2. *Annie Oakley* (1935): Exceptional 1880s costuming, and the movie gives the ambience of a 19th-century traveling Wild West Show. Moroni Olsen's portrayal of Buffalo Bill Cody is the best ever.

3. *Union Pacific* (1939): Great overall look with authentic costuming (despite the incorrect six-guns). Exceptional background scenes,

Annie Oakley, from 1935, would have been a great film in color, as it depicts the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show in all its glamor and pomp. Costuming and period detail are at their best in this motion picture.

Author's Collection



Here, stars Joel McCrea, Barbara Stanwyck and Robert Preston hold off an Indian attack from a wrecked train in an exciting publicity still from director Cecil B. DeMille's 1939 epic *Union Pacific*. Many of the film's scenes, such as the track laying, look like genuine footage (if motion pictures had existed in the 1860s).

Author's Collection

and the recreation of the meeting of the two railroads at Promontory Point, Utah, in 1869, looked like newsreel footage (if they'd had it in 1869).

4. *Unconquered* (1947): Wonderful costuming, 50 original flintlocks were used on screen, all-around authentic flavor to scenes. Special authentic details like occasions when Gary Cooper and other frontiersmen check the locks on their flintlock rifles and pistols, making sure there is priming powder in the pan.

5. *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1949): The camaraderie felt by frontier cavalrymen punctuated by the burial scene of Trooper Smith, an ex-Confederate general, laid to rest in the field under a handmade rebel battle flag.

6. *Across the Wide Missouri* (1951): Authentically portrays fur trappers with real muzzle-loading plains rifles (although the era depicted is too early for percussion arms),



She Wore a Yellow Ribbon, a 1949 classic from director John Ford starring John Wayne, reveals the camaraderie that must've been felt by 1870s frontier cavalrymen. In this studio still, Duke's Capt. Nathan Brittles, Lt. Ross Pennell (Harry Carey, Jr.) and Sergeant Tyree (Ben Johnson) watch pensively, as Indians kill a rogue sutler/gun runner.

Courtesy Michael Blake Collection



clothing and other gear, as well as their customs. Indians too, are portrayed with more realism than in most films. Raw frontier humor is shown when Clark Gable sits in council with Indians and other trappers, and a flea, first picked from the Indian, is quietly passed around, until Gable secrets it into John Hodiak's braided pigtail.

7. *The Last Hunt* (1956): Depicts an 1883 buffalo hunting outfit, shows reloading cartridges, and other camp details. The hunt scenes were believable because footage was shot during actual culling of the Custer State Park, South Dakota, bison herd.

8. *The Searchers* (1956): Captures the pioneers' pride of being "Texicans" in a vast, barren and hostile land. Favorite scene: John Wayne's "Ethan Edwards" shoots the eyes of the dead Comanche found along the trail, and explains, according to Indian belief, without eyes, he'll wander in the hereafter in darkness, while old Mose Harper repeats Ethan's words in sign language.

9. *Paint Your Wagon* (1969): Despite being a musical, the costuming, miner's lodgings and overall depiction of the '49ers at work and play, provides many golden moments.

10. *Monte Walsh* (1970): Paints a colorful portrait of cowboy life during the waning

In 1956's *The Last Hunt*, stars Stewart Granger and Robert Taylor use original 1874 Sharps and 1876 Winchester rifles. Scenes showing campsite hand-loading of cartridges and other hide hunting activities give this Western a more realistic feel than other films about buffalo hunters. The producers used actual footage from the culling of South Dakota's Custer State Park bison herd, which adds greatly to the movie's authenticity.

Courtesy of A Word on Westerns Collection

years of the West's cattle industry. Cowboy logic is shown when Mitchell Ryan's "Shorty" asks Lee Marvin's "Monte," "Can you do this?" then gallops his horse to a smooth slide stop in front of the saloon and leaps off. Walsh responds by sauntering up at a walk and slowly dismounts, humorously illustrating one cowboy's pride in horsemanship, and another's wry humor.

Other contenders include 1923's *The Covered Wagon, Arizona* (1940), 1946's *Red River, The Wonderful Country* (1959), and the 1968 shoot-'em-up *The Stalking Moon*. Of course, everyone has their own favorites, but after careful consideration, those listed here are my selections. Which Westerns would make your "Top Ten" list?



Phil Spangenberg has written for *Guns & Ammo*, appears on the History Channel and other documentary networks, produces Wild West shows, is a Hollywood gun coach and character actor, and is *True West's* Firearms Editor.

Considered among the best films of all time by motion picture critics, the John Ford/John Wayne 1956 classic *The Searchers*, shown here in a Japanese one-sheet movie theater poster, includes several moments that have endeared it to Western fans for decades. Wayne's portrayal of a relentlessly determined yet flawed hero is considered his best work.

Courtesy of A Word on Westerns Collection

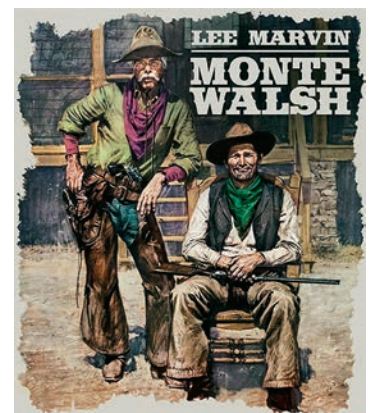


Photo by Phil Spangenberg

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Black-Hills.com



Lee Marvin's 1970 oater *Monte Walsh* offers a colorful and authentically flavored tale of an aging cowboy who sees the West he's loved dying. Packed with action, drama and lots of raw-boned cowboy humor, it's as timeless as the West itself.

Courtesy of A Word on Westerns Collection.



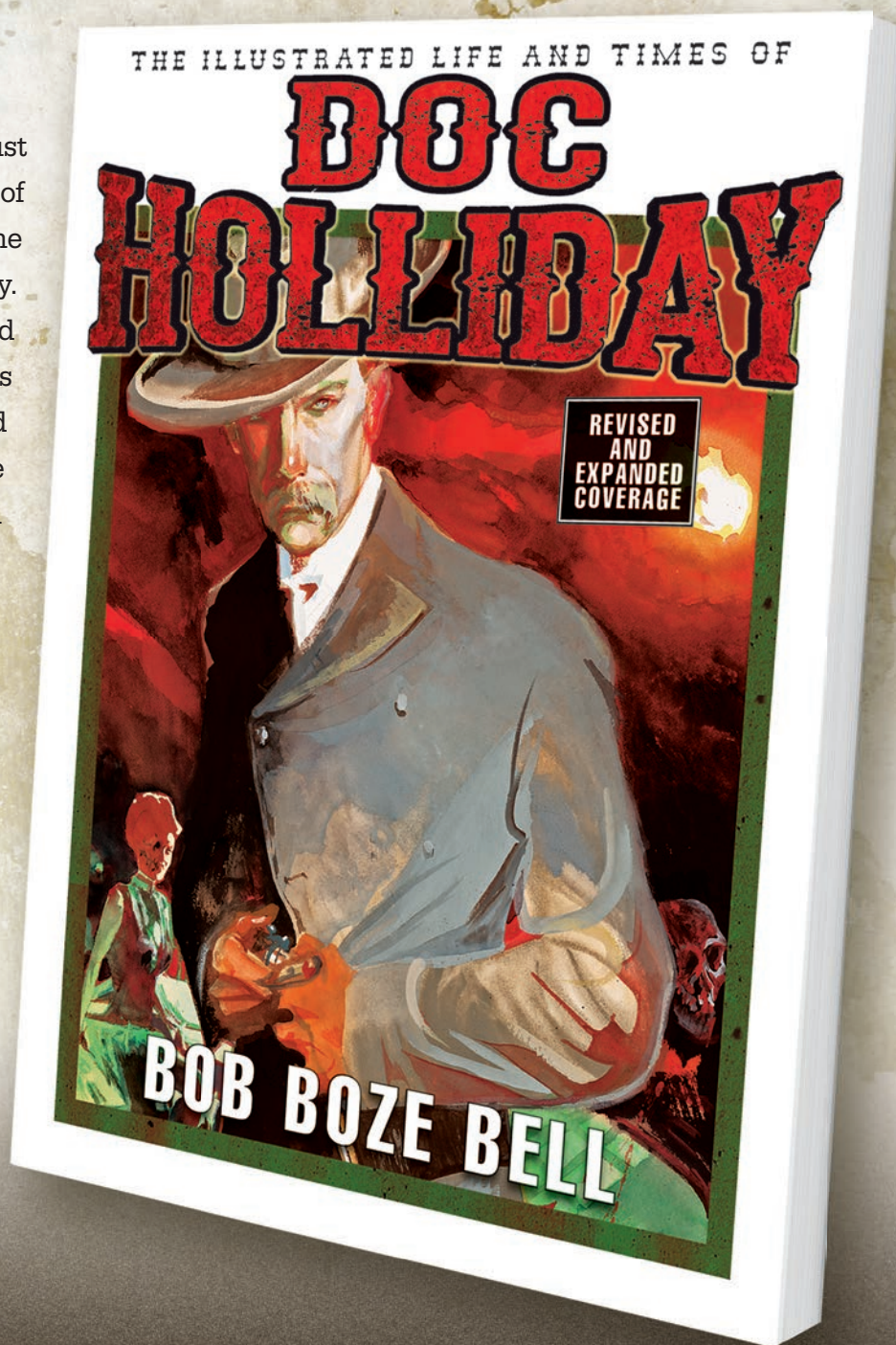
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TRUE WEST
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BY BOB BOZE BELL

Did Doc Kill Ringo?

ONCE AND FOR ALL, HISTORIANS SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON THE TRAGIC DEMISE OF THE LEGENDARY GUNFIGHTER.

July 2, 1882

John Ringo has decided to move to Tombstone (he has been living in San Simon and Galeville). He arrives in town and meets Editor Sam Purdy of the *Epitaph*, who later writes of their talk: "He said that he was as certain of being killed as he was of living then. He said that he might run along for a couple years more, and may not last two days."

Taking in the Fourth of July festivities, Ringo drinks heavily, carousing with his many pard. When Ringo rides out of Tombstone, several days later, he takes extra bottles of liquor for the road.

Two days later, the King of the Cow-boys is spotted at Dial's Ranch, in the South Pass of the Dragoons, still drinking.

A veritable, moving, one-man feast, Ringo encounters Deputy Billy Breakenridge, who later writes of the meeting: "It was shortly after noon. Ringo was very drunk, reeling in the saddle, and said he was going to Galeville. It

was in the summer and a very hot day. He offered me a drink out of a bottle half-full of whiskey, and he had another full bottle. I tasted it and it was too hot to drink. It burned my lips. Knowing that he would have to ride nearly all night before he could reach Galeville, I tried to get him to go back with me to the Goodrich Ranch and wait until after sundown, but he was drunk and stubborn and went on his way. I think this was the last time he was seen alive."

On the afternoon of July 13, not far from Rustler Park, Ringo's horse gets away from him. He attempts to go after his big bay, but he doesn't get far. A shot is heard at about three p.m. at a nearby ranch.

John Peters Ringo's body is discovered late in the afternoon on the 14th, by a teamster hauling wood. The body is found seated in "a bunch of five large black jack oaks growing up in a semicircle from one root, and in the center of them was a large flat rock which made a comfortable seat."

The Coroner's Report

"He was dressed in light hat, blue shirt, vest, pants and drawers. On his feet were a pair of hose [socks] and an undershirt torn up so as to protect his feet. He had evidently traveled but a short distance in this foot gear. His revolver he grasped in his right hand, his rifle resting against the tree close to him. He had on two cartridge belts, the belt for revolver cartridges being buckled on upside down. The undernoted property was found with him and on his person: one Colt's revolver, calibre 45, No. 222, containing five cartridges; one Winchester rifle octagon barrel, calibre 45, model 1876, No. 21,986, containing a cartridge in the breech and ten in the magazine; 1 cartridge belt, containing 9 rifle cartridges; 1 cartridge belt, containing 2 revolver cartridges; 1 silver watch of American Watch company, No. 9339, with silver chain attached; two dollars and sixty cents (\$2.60) in money; 6 pistol cartridges in pocket; 5 shirt studs; 1 small

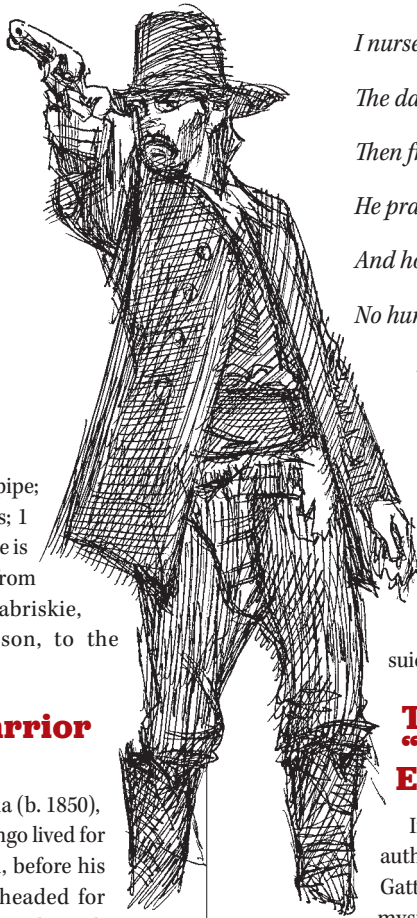
"He was recognized by friends and foes as a recklessly brave man, who would go any distance, or undergo any hardship to serve a friend or punish an enemy."

—*Tombstone Daily Epitaph*

July 18, 1882



All Images and Illustrations Courtesy True West Archives Unless Otherwise Noted



pocket knife; 1 tobacco pipe; 1 comb; 1 block matches; 1 small piece tobacco. There is also a portion of a letter from Messrs. Hereford & Zabriskie, attorneys at law, Tucson, to the deceased, John Ringo.”

A Hoodoo Warrior Cow-boy

Originally from Indiana (b. 1850), the young John Peters Ringo lived for a short time in Missouri, before his family packed up and headed for California. While crossing through Wyoming, his father accidentally shot himself with his own shotgun and was buried along the trail.

After a stay in San Jose, California, John left his mother, brother and sisters in 1870 and gravitated east to Texas, where he ultimately made quite a name for himself in the Hoodoo War (an ethnic cattle feud in the Mason section). Indicted for one killing and reportedly involved in several others, he came out of Texas in the late 1870s with a reputation as a notorious and dangerous man.

Ringo landed in Arizona in 1879 and described himself as a “speculator” in the 1882 Cochise County Great Register. After shooting a fellow drinker over his choice of liquor (his only known shooting in Arizona), Ringo took up residence in San Simon but also stayed in Galeyville, where he held up a poker game (resulting in the third formal charge against him).

He missed the Fremont Street fight with the Earps and Doc Holliday, but tried to make up for it two months later in a failed showdown on Allen Street.

At the time of his death, Ringo was one of the most well-known men in the territory and considered by the press to be the leader of the Cow-boys.

I nursed him till the danger passed

The days went by, he mended fast

Then from the dawn till setting sun

He practiced with that deadly gun

And hour on hour I watched in awe

No human being could match the draw of Ringo

—“Ringo” by Don Robertson and Hal Blair,
as performed by Lorne Greene

While some who knew him could not believe he would take his own life, many others claimed Ringo “frequently threatened suicide.”

The Ringo “Mysteries” Examined

In his book *Johnny Ringo*, author and researcher Steve Gatto examines the so-called mysteries surrounding the King of the Cow-boys’ demise. Here they are with Gatto’s conclusions:

- **Mystery No. 1:** Ringo had torn up his undershirt and wrapped pieces of it around his feet, the theory being that Ringo’s bay horse had wandered off and he started off on foot to search for him. His boots began hurting him, so he pulled them off and made “moccasins of his undershirt.” “Crazed with thirst” and far from help, Ringo gave up, sat down and shot himself.

The Facts: According to the coroner’s report, Ringo had “travelled but a short distance in this foot gear.” And he was found within spitting distance of water (200 feet) and “not more than 700 feet from Smith’s house.” Also, “The inmates of Smith’s house heard a shot about 3 o’clock Thursday evening,” and it is believed this is the lone shot that ended Ringo’s life. The lone shot also argues against a gun battle, as described by Wyatt Earp, wherein he claims after a protracted exchange of gunfire, Earp got Ringo with a lucky shot at 75 yards (also unlikely given the trajectory of the death wound, which was upward at a 45-degree angle between the right eye and ear).

- **Mystery No. 2:** Found on Ringo’s body were two cartridge belts, but the belt for revolver cartridges was “buckled on upside down.” The conspiracy theorists believe that Ringo’s killer(s) put the belt on upside down to humiliate him, or make a point.

The Facts: Ringo was on an extended drunk and possibly put his belt on incorrectly, and who’s to say, he didn’t do it on purpose?

- **Mystery No. 3:** Small parts of the forehead and scalp were gone, including some hair, which the coroner’s report said appeared as if “someone had cut it with a knife.”

The Facts: Even if someone had taken hair as a sort of trophy, it doesn’t mean Ringo was murdered. It’s possible John Yoast, the man who initially found Ringo, took the hair as a souvenir.

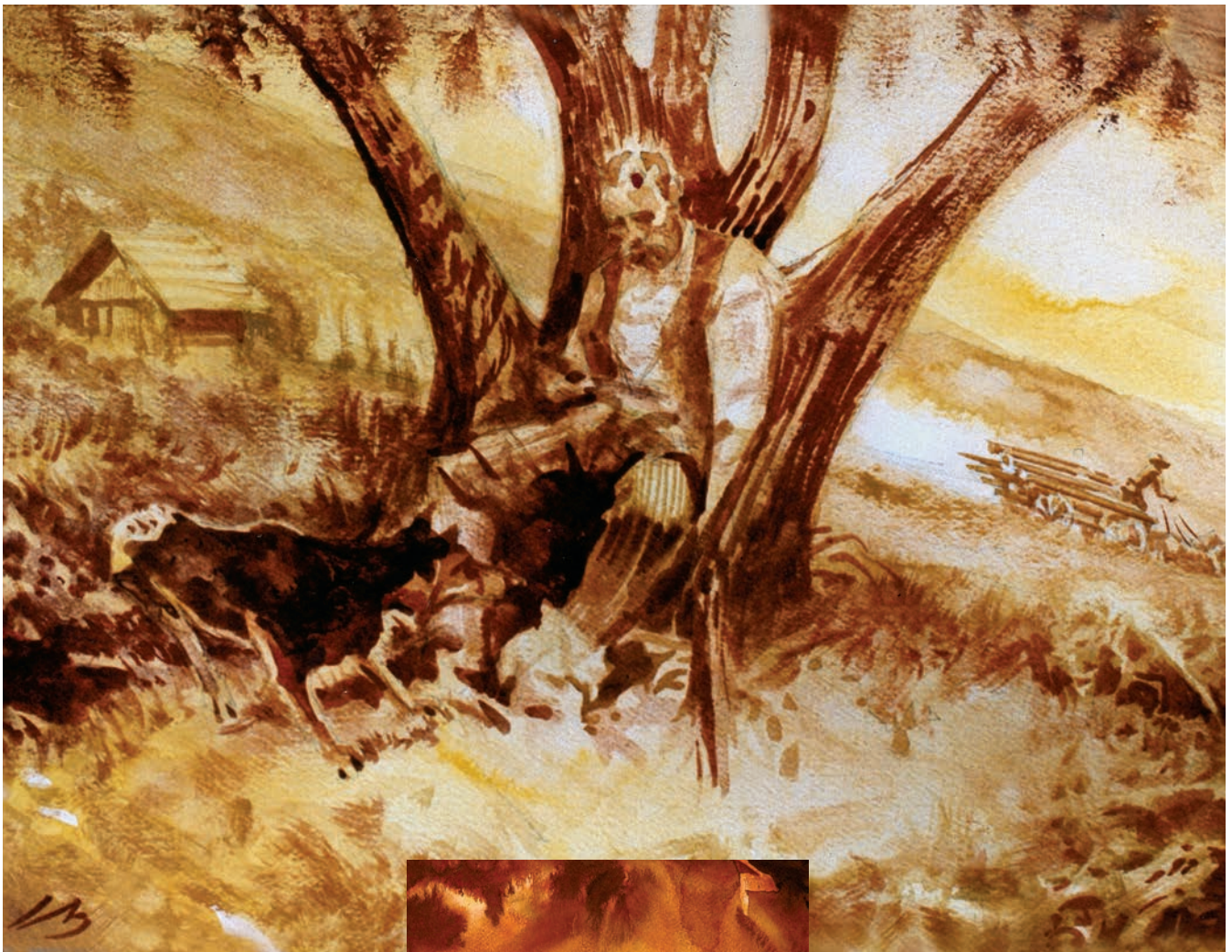
- **Mystery No. 4:** There were no powder burns on Ringo’s temple, suggesting that he was shot at a distance.

The Facts: The coroner’s jury made no mention of the absence or presence of powder burns. Plus, Ringo’s body had been lying in the hot sun and was decomposing rapidly and “had turned black.” The men were more concerned with burying the body. It probably did not occur to them that more than a century later, people would be debating the particulars of their descriptions.

In Conclusion:

“I showed [Yoast] where the bullet had entered the tree on the left side. Blood and brains [were] oozing from the wound and matted his hair. There was an empty shell in the six-shooter and the hammer was on that. I called it a suicide fifty-two years ago, I am still calling it suicide. I guess I’m the last of the coroner’s jury.”

—Robert Boller, 1934



Evolution of a Legend

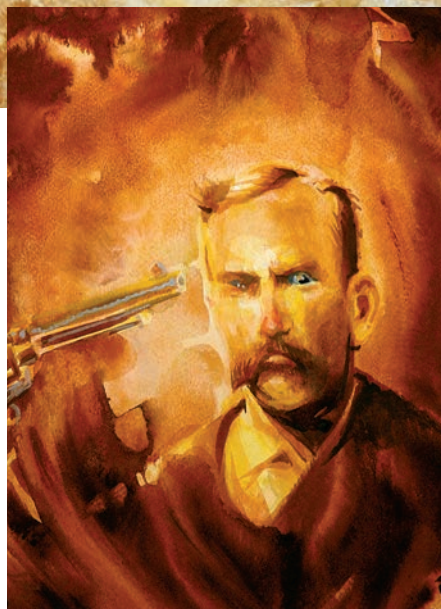
How did a self-described “speculator” and hard drinker, with a modest record of “kills” or gunfights, become one of the most famous names in the annals of Old West gunfighters? A trail of hyperbole gives us a clue:

“During the past few years thirty-two men dared to doubt his honor. They now fill thirty-two graves ... although he had many competitors in his line, he had no true rivals, and Curly Bill and Billy the Kid will not bear comparison with him.”

—Grant County Herald, *July 22, 1882*

“Ringo was a mysterious man. He had a college education, but was reserved and morose. He drank heavily as if to drown his troubles; he was a perfect gentleman when sober, but inclined to be quarrelsome when drinking. He was a good shot and afraid of nothing, and had great authority with the rustling element.”

—*Billy Breakenridge, Helldorado, 1928*



“John Ringo stalks through the stories of old Tombstone days like a Hamlet among outlaws, an introspective, tragic figure, darkly handsome, splendidly brave, a man born for better things, who, having thrown his life recklessly away, drowned his memories in cards and drink and drifted without definite purpose or destination.”

—*Walter Noble Burns, Tombstone, 1927*

A wood hauler, James Yoast, notices “a man in the midst of a clump of trees, apparently asleep.” But when he sees his dog “smelling at the man’s face and snorting,” Yoast stops and investigates. He finds Ringo’s lifeless body, which has been lying there for about 24 hours and is already turning black.

“John Ringo was a man with whom everyone in that part of Arizona must reckon, the fastest gunfighter and the deadliest, a man who courted trouble, with the thoughtless courage of a bulldog.”

—*Eugene Cunningham, Triggernometry, 1941*

“John Ringo’s image was created for him by inaccuracies of innumerable writers, and I believe that he remains a western figure largely because of the mellifluous tonal quality of his name.”

—*Jack Burrows, John Ringo: The Gunfighter Who Never Was, 1987*



In the 1920s, Tombstone Deputy Billy Breakenridge, one of the last to see Ringo alive, visited the remote grave site and sat in the bough of the tree while a companion snapped a photo. When the film was developed, an eerie face could be seen floating above Breck's head. Some believe it's Ringo. Others believe it a distortion caused in developing the film.

Aftermath: Odds & Ends

Ringo's missing horse was found 11 days later about two miles from the death site. "His saddle was still upon him," the *Epitaph* reported, "with Ringo's coat upon the back of it. In one of the side pockets were three photographs and a card bearing the name of 'Mrs. Jackson' [Ringo's sister]."

In the 1920s, Wyatt Earp began telling a series of writers, including Forrestine Hooker, Frank Lockwood and Frederick Bechdolt, that he had waylaid and killed John Ringo as Earp and his Vendetta posse were on their way out of Arizona in March 1882. Earp even drew a diagram of the fight. The problem with this claim is that Ringo died in July, almost four months after Wyatt had fled the state as a fugitive.

This hasn't stopped some Earp buffs from fantasizing that both Wyatt and Doc Holliday snuck back from Colorado, where they were known to have been in July 1882, and assassinated the Cow-boy leader. Even this



Grisly clues to an enduring mystery: John Ringo's body is found seated on a makeshift throne. The odd details of his condition have fueled debate for over a Century.

strains credulity when one considers that Holliday, at least, was in court in Pueblo, Colorado, two days before Ringo's death.

Buckskin Frank Leslie reputedly was the first to take credit for the death of Ringo. While in Yuma Prison for the murder of his wife, Leslie allegedly confessed to a guard that he killed Ringo. Few believe him.

Another name attached to Ringo's demise has been Johnny-Behind-the-Deuce (Michael O'Rourke), who supposedly ambushed Ringo near the latter's camp in the Chiricahuas. Why? O'Rourke got "scared up," said Fred Dodge, a Tombstone resident at the time, who shared his story with author Stuart Lake. This version has even less adherents.



John Ringo was buried next to the tree where he died. Today, the burial spot is on private property, but the owners have been gracious to the many Old West aficionados who make the trek to the site.

BY GARY ROBERTS,
WITH JEFF MOREY, CASEY TEFERTILLER
AND JOHN BOESSENECKER

Was it Suicide or Doc?

Doc Holliday did not kill John Ringo. Nor did Wyatt Earp kill him. Most of the important evidence has already been presented by others here.

After Colorado Gov. Frederick W. Pitkin refused to honor Arizona's extradition request for the return of Holliday, Doc was ordered released on a writ of habeas corpus. Before he was processed, however, an arrest warrant for larceny was issued at Pueblo. On the morning of May 31, 1882, Deputy Sheriff Linton, Bat Masterson and Bob Paul escorted Doc to Pueblo where that afternoon he was charged with having swindled a man out of \$400. Doc waived examination, posted bond of \$300, and was bound over to the July term of court.

Holliday remained in Pueblo for a while, and on June 16, 1882, he checked into the St. James Hotel in Gunnison. He was interviewed by the Gunnison paper, and it appeared in print on June 18, 1882. His reunion with Wyatt and Warren Earp continued through the end of June. On July 8, he was reported to have arrived in Salida, Colorado, with two other gamblers, Sam Osgood and Texas George Robinson. The paper reported that they would "remain [in Salida] several days." The visit was cut short by his court affairs in Pueblo.

On June 11, the grand jury indicted Doc for larceny and advised the sheriff that he could admit Doc to bail in the amount of \$500. Clearly, the process had been worked out in advance because the "District Attorney, and the said defendant in his own proper person as well as by his counsel, W. G. Hollins, Esq., also came." Doc pled not guilty, posted bail, and was released. On July 18, the case was continued, and the same day, the *Leadville Daily Herald* reported that Doc was visiting in Leadville. Remember, Ringo died on July 13.

It is worth noting that Chuck Hornung, in his *Wyatt Earp's Cow-boy Campaign: The Bloody Restoration of Law and Order*



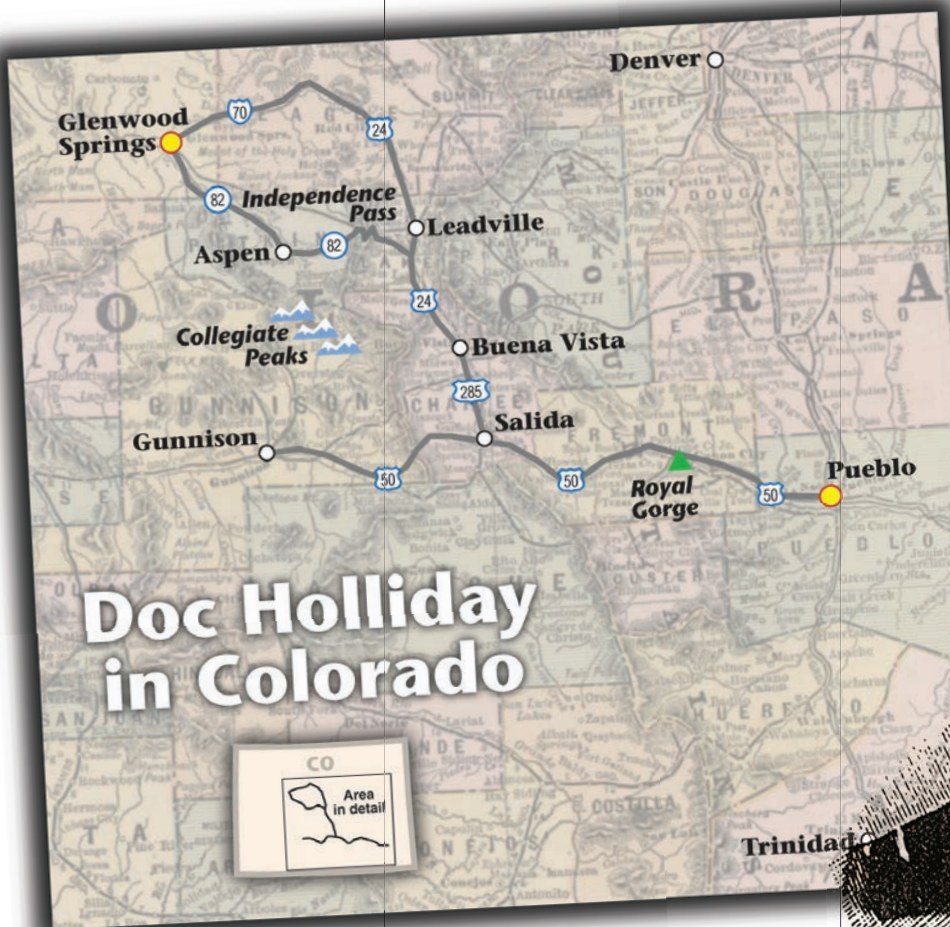
Rain-Soaked StandOff

January 17, 1882

The inevitable rematch between the Cow-boys and the Earp Gang almost becomes reality, with Doc Holliday and John Ringo facing off on Allen Street in front of the Occidental Saloon. The Earps and their supporters are lined up on the north side of Fremont Street, with the Cow-boys on the south side. Before a fight can open, police officer Jim Flynn grabs Ringo from behind and arrests him and Doc. Taken to city court, Ringo and Doc are fined \$30 each for carrying concealed weapons. Wyatt Earp, who was watching in the crowd, is also arrested on a weapons charge, but that is dropped because he is a deputy U.S. marshal.



After snow flurries and a shower, Tombstone's flat roofs emit streams of water as Doc Holliday squares off on Allen Street against John Ringo. The three-story Grand Hotel behind Ringo is where the Cow-boys are headquartered, while the Cosmopolitan is the home base for the Earp Gang. On more than one occasion, local diarist George Parsons describes the two factions hugging their side of the street in a standoff.



Perry Mallon, self-appointed detective

True West Archives

Along the Mexican Border, 1882, acknowledges that Steve Gatto and I made a strong case that Doc was in Pueblo based on the court records. He suggests that Doc's appearance and the document's language could have been a subterfuge in a covert operation hatched in Gunnison by the Earps.

Here is a brief item from the *Gunnison News-Democrat*, July 15, 1882, that I believe scuttles the Wyatt Earp-killed-John Ringo story as well: "Messrs. Wyatt and Warren Earp expect to leave for San Francisco in a day or two." As far as I know, this article has not been published since it appeared in the Gunnison paper, and it is consistent with the movement of the Earps. I have not confirmed when exactly they left Gunnison, but when they left, they headed for San Francisco, where Wyatt and Josephine reunited. Early in 1883, they returned to Colorado.

I cannot believe that either Wyatt or Doc had any desire to undertake such a perilous mission. Doc's movements were followed closely, and Wyatt stayed in Gunnison until after Doc's extradition effort was dropped.

A clarification or two: After splitting up with Wyatt in Albuquerque, Doc and Dan Tipton proceeded to Colorado. The others in the posse followed shortly. The destination was Trinidad, where Bat Masterson had just been elected city marshal. Doc appreciated the rest. The other vendetta riders arrived surreptitiously at El Moro, just south of Trinidad. Wyatt seemed comfortable there and enjoyed the company of Bat Masterson for a few days. Wyatt, Warren and Tipton left for Gunnison on May 5, actually bound first for Pueblo for a scheduled boxing match in South Pueblo that never

happened because the contestants could not agree on a referee. The Earps stayed in Pueblo a day or two afterward, said their goodbyes to Bat and left for Gunnison. According to the Pueblo papers, the other associates of the Earps went south at that point.

Doc lingered at Trinidad longer, clearly feeling safe and secure. On May 8, back in Tombstone, Judge Stillwell closed the case on his altercation with Milt Joyce. Two days later, Doc moved on to Pueblo and the gambling opportunities in South Pueblo. On March 14, he left Pueblo with Texas George Robinson and Sam Osgood, two gambling buddies, bound for Denver and the horse races. Masterson was on the same train. At the fairgrounds in Denver, Doc, his friends and Bat Masterson spent the day.

Among those they spoke with were David J. Cook, head of the Rocky Mountain Detective Agency, and Denver Police Chief James Lomery. That night, on Doc's way to a meeting with Colorado mining man John Vimont, who he had known in Tombstone, he was accosted and arrested by Perry Mallon.

He returned to Pueblo after the governor refused to extradite him in company with Deputy Sheriff Linton from Pueblo, Bat Masterson and Bob Paul. On May 31, Doc appeared in court on larceny charges and was released on bond. On June 4, Wyatt made his first public statement about the situation in Arizona. Doc soon joined the Earps at Gunnison, where he was interviewed yet again and spent the balance of June with his former comrades. About July 1, he and his gambling friends, Robinson and Osgood, showed up in Salida, on the railroad between Gunnison and Pueblo, where Doc was due to appear in court on July 11. They stayed there a few days before proceeding to Pueblo and his court date.

Judd Riley, an officer of the law in Gunnison, said later that the Earp party caused no trouble in Gunnison that summer, except for a couple of episodes when Doc had too much to drink. The others quickly took Doc under control on those occasions. Incidentally, for those interested in such matters, Riley said that Earp wore two pistols, high under his shoulders.

The stop at Salida explains why Doc was there, and helps to establish Doc's movements.

—*Gary Roberts*, author of *Doc Holliday: Life and Legend*

Who Did It?

THREE EXPERTS SHARE THEIR PERSPECTIVE

Frankly, I have never been fully convinced that Ringo committed suicide. That upside-down gun belt is weird. And, there is absolutely no mention of any holster. Finally, that citizen's report on Ringo's demise claims there was a hat on Ringo's head when the body was found. If Ringo offed himself, it is hard to imagine how he managed to keep his hat on. To me, Johnny Ringo's death remains an unsolved homicide. Maybe it was a suicide. Maybe it wasn't. Unless and until more reliable information is obtained, the exact fate of Johnny Ringo remains a mystery because we simply don't have enough reliable information to settle the matter once and for all.

—*Jeff Morey*

There is a slim possibility that somebody else killed Ringo, but it is extremely unlikely that it was Wyatt Earp, since he was in Colorado, and even the Buntline Special could not shoot that far. I have a really fascinating old pulp Western magazine from the 1930s with a first-person witness quoted telling how he watched Nashville Frank Leslie kill Ringo. My grandfather had saved the magazine, and 30 years after his death, it was like a gift from the past. The article was by Ed Earl Repp, who wrote many TV shows. The most likely COD remains suicide.

—*Casey Tefertiller*

The Pueblo court shows that Doc appeared "in propria persona"—meaning he was there in person, so it was physically impossible for him to be in Arizona. The Boyer fans and kooks used to claim that Doc was not there and his lawyer appeared for him, but the language "in propria persona" eliminates that totally.

—*John Boessenecker*



BST

GUNS

GUNS

LARGE FRAMES

PROP.

PROP.

PROP.

30A

30

29A

29

28A

28

27A

BY THE EDITORS OF *TRUE WEST*

TOMBSTONE

ON THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR



Tombstone screenwriter and director Kevin Jarre was removed from the set after three weeks of principal photography on the epic Western in the summer of 1993. Afterward, his career would never be the same, and he died 19 years later at the age of 56.

Courtesy Bob Boze Bell

HISTORIANS, ACTORS AND FILM CRITICS WEIGH IN ON KEVIN JARRE'S ORIGINAL SCRIPT—AND WHETHER IT SHOULD BE REMADE AND FINALLY GET ITS DUE.

Everyone seems to agree that Kevin Jarre's original script for *Tombstone* was brilliant.

So why hasn't someone dusted off the source material and re-filmed it the way Kevin wrote it? Is it because it's too long for a movie, as some suggest, or is there a deeper truth about the whole shebang? We asked the participants in the 1993 film to weigh in, along with some of the best historians in the Earp field.

Read on, this is very insightful stuff.

—Bob Boze Bell



What was Kurt Russell's role in Kevin Jarre's removal from the *Tombstone* set? We may never know, but it is generally agreed that without Russell's leadership on the set—on all aspects of the film's production, direction and script after Jarre was fired—that the film would not be the classic it is considered today.



All "Tombstone" photos courtesy Buena Vista Pictures Unless Otherwise Noted

Not Ready for Prime Time

In December 1993, Buena Vista Pictures and Cinergi Productions released the classic modern Western, *Tombstone*, the story of Wyatt Earp and the shootout at the O.K. Corral. Written by Kevin Jarre, who, in 1989, also wrote the screenplay for the award-winning film *Glory*, the script was the main reason many actors wanted to be a part of this project. This was to have been Jarre's first attempt at directing. And, with crackling dialogue, biting accuracy, and brilliant dramatization, the screenplay came closest to telling the legend of the shootout better than any other previous attempt. Rather than an action-packed shoot-'em-up, Jarre's script focused on a character study of Wyatt, his brothers and Doc Holliday. Sadly, however, as brilliant a writer as Jarre was, his enthusiasm couldn't offset his lack of directorial experience. He just didn't have any, and he refused to listen to those who did. Imagine ignoring Kurt Russell, Sam Elliott, Val Kilmer and Bill Fraker when they tried to make suggestions. Many have said it was a shame that Kevin hadn't had a few smaller productions under his belt before taking on a project of this magnitude. And a review of Jarre's unused footage clearly supports that contention.

Most of Kevin's scenes were master shots, visually beautiful but challenging to edit. His goal was to shoot *Tombstone* on "sticks," in the style of John Ford, but he either didn't understand the concept or didn't know how to execute the vision. The result, wasted time, energy, money and hours of discarded footage. The only scenes Jarre shot that appear in the final release are those with Charlton Heston, and they couldn't reshoot them after Jarre was released as Heston had already departed the set and wasn't available.

Within mere days of start-of-production, it was apparent Kevin wasn't able to bring his script to fruition. While it is not explicitly known precisely what prompted the studio to replace him, it was clear that the fledgling novice would not deliver what the studio expected. Some have said the studio only



Crash Crandall

In May of 1993, when filming began on *Tombstone*, near Elgin, Arizona, artist and re-enactor Jerry Crandall filmed a scene on his horse, Apache, where he gets shot by the Earp posse. As Jerry fell, he threw his black powder .45 skyward. He didn't know it at the time, but he dislocated his shoulder. Like a trooper, he got up and did a second take.

Kevin Jarre's career as a director began and ended in the Arizona desert as he was removed from the *Tombstone* production less than halfway through principal photography. His original script remains an unfulfilled dream of many of his fans and supporters.

Courtesy Bob Boze Bell

wanted Jarre's script, and it was their intention all along to replace him as director; others pointed to Kevin's micromanagement and lack of adherence to a schedule. Still others spoke of scene composition and coverage. Dialogue that previously leapt off the page now sounded stilted and artificial, and the actors' performances appeared forced and pedestrian.

There were numerous rumors on the set; Jarre was drunk, or doing drugs or was out riding his horse all day, or deliberately being sabotaged. In any case, the studio had had enough, and after considering John Milius and John McTiernan, among others, Jarre was fired and replaced by action director George Cosmatos. For Kevin, a project that began with such high expectations and excitement ended in failure. Several of Jarre's ideas were used but eventually re-filmed by Cosmatos. In the revised screenplay, parts were pared, dialogue changed, scenes blended. Some said they wouldn't have agreed to do the film if that had been the original script.

Jarre never again achieved the brief success he had with *Glory*. He was a script doctor, involved with *The Devil's Own* before the script was torn apart in 1997, worked on *The Mummy* (1999), and supposedly was an uncredited writer on John Lee Hancock's *The Alamo* (2004). If he just had a bit more experience, it would have been interesting to see what he could have accomplished with his *Tombstone* script. However, at that time in his career, he just wasn't prepared to take on such a massive opportunity.

—John Farkis

Author of *The Making of Tombstone: Behind the Scenes of the Classic Modern Western*



According to *Tombstone* consultant Jeff Morey, the casting of Harry Carey Jr. as Marshal Fred White (second from left) was a tip of the hat to the heritage of Carey family members who starred in previous O.K. Corral Westerns. L.-r.: Sam Elliott as Virgil Earp, Carey Jr., Bill Paxton as Morgan Earp and Kurt Russell as Wyatt Earp.

A Savaged Script

Simply put, the script Kevin originally wrote was most brutally savaged in the vendetta ride scenes. In Kevin's script, the action scenes are anchored in an explicit context. That makes those scenes dramatically meaningful and informs the audience as to who exactly is being killed by the Earp party. In the film, as released, the vendetta ride becomes a somewhat confusing montage of scenes that lacks dramatic cohesion. And, one new scene, which makes no sense whatsoever, is added for no discernable purpose. That is the scene of Wyatt's posse lynching someone in front of the Dagoon Saloon in *Tombstone*.

If Kevin's script had been followed, the finished film would have been bigger because more members of the Cowboy gang would have been clearly identified and delineated. And, if Kevin's script had been shot, the film, as a whole, would have made more sense. Action scenes, without proper previous character development, become meaningless.

Also, if Kevin's script had been followed, the scenes with Hugh O'Brian would not have been cut. Having O'Brian in the film would have made explicit how *Tombstone* fits into the larger sweep of previous Earp films and TV shows. In fact, originally, Kevin wanted Burt Lancaster to play Marshal Fred White. If that had panned out, *Tombstone* would have been a sort of culmination of Earp films. For instance, Harry Carey Jr. portrays Fred White. In the history of Earp films, Harry Carey Sr. played the Doc Holliday character in *Law and Order* (1932), the very first Earp movie. Then, 25 years later, in 1957, Olive Carey, Harry Carey Jr.'s mother, and the widow of Harry Carey Sr., portrayed the mother of Billy Clanton in *Gunfight at the O.K. Corral*. Both Harry Sr. and his wife, Olive, actually knew the real Wyatt Earp. So there was a lot going on with the casting of *Tombstone* that was completely missed by film critics.

—Jeff Morey

Historical consultant for *Tombstone*

What Could Have Been

Kevin Jarre's original script is stunning and haunting. Had that film been made, it would stand out as perhaps the greatest of the genre. It would also have been very, very long. Would it have captured the imagination in the way that the actual film did? I can only guess, but I somehow doubt it. The current version of *Tombstone* is a film people can watch over and over, repeatedly enjoying it. Not many films can make that claim.

—Casey Tefertiller

Author of *Wyatt Earp: The Life Behind the Legend*

Anyone in Hollywood Listening?

If Kevin Jarre had been able to film his own script, it would have made Scorsese's *The Irishman* look like a trailer. It's a great script—I think somewhere I called it “the great unpublished Wyatt Earp novel”—but we're not talking feature film, we're talking miniseries. Kevin just had too much to say. Some of the deleted scenes that were re-inserted on the DVD give us an idea of how much richer the story would have been. For example, as Doc leaves Kate to ride with Wyatt on his vendetta, he echoes Frankie Lane's song to ask her “Have you no kind word to say while I ride away?” Perhaps the best example is the scene someone sent me on VHS where Billy Clanton swipes Wyatt's horse and Kurt Russell rides out to the Cowboy camp to retrieve it. We actually get to see what it is the Cowboys do: rebranding stolen Mexican cattle. Particularly interesting is that in real life, Wyatt went out to the camp without a gun.

Tombstone is pretty good as it is, but Jarre's script is so much more layered and expansive. Come to think of it, it really

would make an excellent miniseries. Anyone in Hollywood listening?

—Allen Barra

Author of *Inventing Wyatt Earp: His Life and Many Legends*

A Misguided Vision

While Kevin's pre-production period was one of the more thorough and detailed of productions I have worked on (selection of wardrobe, boots, hats, weapons), I was surprised at his shot selection choices and his sense of composition. During the first few days of shooting (if not the actual first day of shooting—memories get confused) Kevin lined up a shot with Wyatt and Josephine when they “meet cute” before their challenging horse race through the woods and down a steep drop.

The way it was staged Josephine towered a full foot and a half over Wyatt's head. In no one's book is this a proper composition that would show two equally strong personalities meeting privately for the first time. We all saw this as a problem. I asked Bill Fraker (the director of photography and associate producer) if I was

wrong and he agreed and said he would talk to Kevin. He did. Kevin would not change the composition. I asked Terry Leonard to have a word as well (both men were highly respected in their fields and as directors as well). Again Kevin argued to keep his composition.

I will not speak for Kurt Russell, but I felt that he was not happy at “looking up” to Josephine at such an awkward angle—so I too talked to Kevin. He told me that he intended to do such novel compositions throughout the film and that his style would not be MTV music video—but John Ford.



Kevin Jarre's more intimate scene between Dana Delaney's Josephine Marcus and Kurt Russell's Wyatt Earp was not included in *Tombstone's* theatrical release.

KEVIN JARRE

THE MAN WHO CREATED *TOMBSTONE*

BY HENRY C. PARKE

Born in Detroit in 1954, Kevin Jarre had a tumultuous youth, which predestined him for a cinematic career. The son of gorgeous 1960s starlet Laura Devon, he lived first in Wyoming with his “Hemingwayesque” biological father, Cleland Boyd Clark, a rancher and fashion photographer. After moving to Hollywood with his mother, he was soon playing bit parts in *Flipper*, alongside series star (and now Kevin’s stepfather) Brian Kelly. By 1967, Devon had shed Kelly and wed French film composer Maurice Jarre, who’d won Oscars for *Lawrence of Arabia* and *Dr. Zhivago*. Maurice adopted Kevin.

As a teenager in England, where Maurice was scoring *Ryan’s Daughter*, Kevin befriended the film’s director, David Lean, who scoffed at the lad’s plans for an acting career, encouraging him instead to write and direct, and to skip film school. “He said I could learn all that in six months.”

Jarre was writing spec scripts, “living on dog food at the time,” when he got his break: He was hired to write *Rambo*. A spec script became *The Tracker*, an HBO Western starring Kris Kristofferson. He says he was a “Civil War freak...ever since I got some toy soldiers when I was a kid,” and that a friend’s comment that Jarre resembled Robert Gould Shaw, the white Harvard grad who led the all-black Massachusetts 54th in the Civil War, led to research, and the film *Glory*, which won three Oscars.

Then came *Tombstone*: Jarre’s brilliant retelling of the O.K. Corral gunfight became not merely a classic but the career zenith of virtually everyone associated with the film. It was to have been his directorial debut, but sadly, unable to direct at a pace to match the film’s shooting schedule, he was replaced. He followed with the I.R.A. thriller, *The Devil’s Own*, and shared story credit in the 1999 hit, *The Mummy*. Though, tragically, Jarre died of heart failure at the age of 56, the legacy he left, with *Glory* and *Tombstone*, is more than sufficient to guarantee him film immortality.

I knew we were in trouble but hoped that as time progressed Kevin would pay attention to Billy Fraker and come to an understanding of how the composition of a shot tells the same story as the dialogue does, if not more.

That never happened in spite of the efforts of many people to convince him. While Kevin was still directing and after the change of directors, Cinergi was accused of taking a classic American Western and turning it into a music video Western. That was meant as a slam, but if you look at the final cut of the movie, while there is some MTV-style cutting, in the end it all works together. If Kevin had stayed on, there would have been mighty battles in the cutting room after his first cut.

Andy Vajna at Cinergi, I am almost certain but have no documentary evidence, had final

cut rights to the movie. He and his partner at the time at Carolco—Mario Kassar—successfully cut a teaser/trailer of *First Blood* after an initial viewing proved less than welcome with Sylvester Stallone. That teaser went over HUGE at Cannes, and the picture was cut using the style that was created in that editing room.

Revenge motif was a best seller for Carolco. A wronged person sets out to right that wrong and is willing to die in the attempt. Many of Carolco’s films featured an armed hero/star with a weapon in a posture of combat against a background of red. In *Tombstone* it was the burning building on the main street with the four armed heroes in black marching into history.

I think Andy would have gotten intimately involved in the editing had Kevin completed the film, and I would bet that his version would



have been significantly different from the one Kevin had in mind. This is hindsight on my part and conjecture, but I knew both men and I know that Andy would have won.

—Bob Misiowski

Tombstone producer, shared credit with Sean Daniel and Jim Jacks

The Greatest Western?

If one disregards the over-the-top bloodbath scenes in its first five minutes and its final 15 minutes, *Tombstone* may well be the finest Western ever filmed. Its sets, costumes, casting, acting and especially the extraordinary screenplay by Kevin Jarre, place it far beyond any other motion picture about the Old West. When it first appeared in 1993, some critics pooh-poohed the sets and the clothing. Western sets were supposed to look like ghost towns, and male actors were supposed to wear batwing chaps, huge Stetson hats and buscadero holsters. But critics



and viewers alike soon understood the truth: mining towns like Tombstone were then new; batwing chaps, huge Stetson hats and buscadero holsters did not exist in the Old West; and people in that era wore clothing exactly like that seen in *Tombstone*.

Much of that authenticity came from the expertise of its technical consultant, Jeff Morey. His input also contributed to the fact that the script, though fictionalized, nonetheless provided a reasonably accurate account—at least by Hollywood screenwriter standards—of Wyatt Earp’s war against the Cowboys. Yes, there are wild fabrications, such as the killing of John Ringo by Doc Holliday, but also a realistic reimagining of the Earp women as former prostitutes—which modern research has confirmed. One of the most impressive features of the film is Jarre’s carefully crafted dialogue—the actors employ colorful 1880s slang with an easy abandon.

Those who have not seen *Tombstone* are in for a real treat.

—John Boessenecker

Author of *Ride the Devil’s Herd: Wyatt Earp’s Epic Battle Against the West’s Biggest Outlaw Gang*

Lost Possibilities

In terms of Kevin Jarre’s *Tombstone* script, that original treatment has been about as mythologized as the original events themselves. “It was Shakespearean!” “The most historically accurate telling of the Tombstone tale!” “A lost masterpiece!”

Hold your horses, folks. It was a great script, and it was the reason that many of the actors signed on to the project. Kevin Jarre had a vision, and here it was embedded. But it was Hollywood, not history. It was modern popular culture, not The Bard. Things were lost when Kevin was fired

The walk-down in *Tombstone* was an instant classic and a defining scene in the critically acclaimed 1993 Western. L.-r.: Val Kilmer as Doc, Sam Elliott as Virgil, Kurt Russell as Wyatt and Bill Paxton as Morgan.

and Kurt Russell took over—including scenes that added flavor and continuity to the story. Certain characters were not as developed as they would have been if the original script had been maintained. But the truth is this: the Jarre treatment was not producible, not within the confines of a two-hour movie. Not within a somewhat reasonable studio budget. That’s the hard reality. But the legend is more interesting, fraught with lost possibilities and a masterpiece unmanned. So let the horses run.

—Mark Boardman

Features Editor of *True West* and editor of *The Tombstone Epitaph*



BY MICHAEL BIEHN

Truth

IN BLACK AND WHITE

THE MULTITALENTED ACTOR WHO PLAYED JOHNNY RINGO IN *TOMBSTONE* REFLECTS ON KEVIN JARRE'S SCRIPT AND THE FILM'S PRODUCTION.

About two years ago my wife and I decided we would spend more time in Arizona. We selected a home in historic Bisbee, drawn by its small-town, artisanal character. Bisbee also lies within close proximity of Tombstone, setting of the 1993 movie in which I played Johnny Ringo.

I'd agreed to play Ringo, and I tried to envision the case he would make for himself, to grasp his reason for being. I didn't approach him as a "bad guy" per se; actors don't play bad guys; they play characters in situations. It helped, too, how much the other characters built up Johnny as the fearsome antagonist: "The deadliest pistoleer since Wild Bill," Doc calls him in their first scene. And near the end, on the night of the final showdown, Doc and Wyatt wax eloquent on what makes a man like Johnny tick: "Got a great empty hole right through the middle of him and no matter what he does he can't ever fill it...he wants revenge." "For what?" "For being born." After a buildup like that, I didn't have to do a whole lot more than just show up.

That was why I objected to a scene in the screenplay following Johnny's "I want your blood!" drunken howl. Curly Bill whisks Johnny off to a ranch house, clearly intent on raping the woman inside, and leers "See, Johnny, there is a God."

Overkill, I protested. Johnny's villainous persona is already established by now; if shooting a Catholic priest at a wedding hadn't

accomplished that, it's hard to imagine what would. And I felt demonstrating Johnny's knowledge of the Bible and Latin prior to shooting the priest suggested a backstory involving the church that gave him grounds for his actions.

That "See, Johnny, there is a God" line didn't survive to the final film; we never shot it. All movies undergo screenplay modifications prior to and during production as well as through editing, this was just one of many cuts. In fact, the story-behind-the-story of

Tombstone is just how severely the screenplay was "modified" when screenwriter Kevin Jarre was dismissed as director weeks into production. Whole sequences went on the chopping block during the hectic weekend following Kevin's departure, when the fate of the production hung in the balance.

Kurt Russell talked in these pages (*True West*, October 2006) about what he and the producers faced in determining what would remain of the screenplay, a dilemma made even more difficult by the decision to not use any of Kevin's footage. Kurt talked about how much he had to pull down from Wyatt's scenes to give the other characters breathing space. The Cowboy roles also underwent severe cuts; Powers Booth and

I lost meaty scenes and fifth credited Robert Burke (Frank McLaury) barely has any lines or screen time in the movie.

I had long believed that after Kevin's departure, *Tombstone* lost the depth of his original vision; that the shadings and nuances of the primary figures had been stripped away and what remained were the familiar, stereotypical caricatures of the standard Western. I'm sure my identification with Ringo and my bonding with the actors playing other Cowboys put blinders on me and rendered my memories myopic. I'd come to believe that Kevin's almost

fanatical desire for historical accuracy in matters like wardrobe and weaponry meant that his screenplay was similarly accurate in depicting the fullness of its characters.



Michael Biehn inhabited the *Tombstone* role of Johnny Ringo as no other actor, before or since. Biehn credits Jarre's script for inspiring his fan-favorite interpretation of the outlaw.

Kevin Jarre's original *Tombstone* script is noted for having much fuller roles—and more dialogue—for the actresses who played the Earp women. L.-r.: Dana Wheeler-Nicolson as Mattie, Kurt Russell as Wyatt, Paula Malcomson as Allie, Sam Elliott as Virgil, Lisa Collins as Louisa and Bill Paxton as Morgan.



I'd come to believe that with such certainty that I recently did something I've never done before—dug up a copy of the version of *Tombstone* I first read 30 years ago. I don't watch my old movies—the “willing suspension of disbelief” just isn't there for me—let alone reread the screenplays. But filled with what I'd been reading and fired by the conviction that Kevin had tried to tell a truer story than all the previous versions by far, I began reading.

There was a comforting old familiarity in the screenplay's opening lines, Robert Mitchum's voice intoning the opening monologue. Mitchum had been cast as Old Man Clanton in the first scene, but injury kept him from filming, so he narrated instead, and the Old Man went to an early grave as Curly Bill took his best lines. I was fortunate to get the screenplay early, and the caliber of the cast that came together would be among the best of any film of the decade, I would argue, a testament to the screenplay's quality. “Godfather of Westerns,” it's been called.

My first thought after putting the screenplay down after rereading it, however, was “What just happened?”

This wasn't what I remembered at all. That subtlety and nuance, that balanced presentation of the characters I'd persuaded myself was the bedrock of Kevin's screenplay, never existed. Kevin went all in showering the Cowboys in villainy at every turn while exalting Wyatt into an avenging angel Frontier Dirty Harry.

The Wyatt lionizing reaches a high-water mark in a scene near the end during the vendetta ride. Wyatt stumbles upon a wagon train filled with fellow Illini, who hail him without knowing anything about him, a

sequence that ends with a nod to a classic Western with a little boy calling after him something akin to “Come home, Wyatt, come home.” Cue the music. That sequence never got shot, as was true of much of the screenplay's last third, which included subplots drawing out the vendetta ride into a meandering marathon.

I thought when I got to page 90 that I must be nearing the end and gasped when I saw there were still 40 more pages!

In his *True West* interview, Kurt Russell said he often urged Kevin to cut 20 pages, and I'm sure he was referring to this material since much of it went with Kevin. Wyatt lost some nice moments—he had plenty—and Johnny lost a rousing version of a “St. Crispin's Day” oration taking command of the Cowboys in the aftermath of Curly Bill's demise “... This is my time, children. This is where I get woolly.”

One significant discovery for me was how much fuller the women's roles had been; I hadn't appreciated just how severely they'd been emptied out with the screenplay cuts. Josie (Dana Delany) was an integral player in *Tombstone* history as well as in the screenplay. She was first engaged to Sheriff Behan before fixing her eyes on Wyatt, and the ensuing romantic triangle contributed to the tensions that resulted in the gunfight.

With Kevin's departure, Josie's screen time was so scaled back that any reference to her involvement with Behan disappeared, and her relationship with Wyatt amounts to little more than a chance encounter on horseback. A tense scene with Josie and Mattie Earp vanished, along with just about any other presence of the Earp wives. In the screenplay, Big Nose Kate's

repartee was every bit the match for Doc Holliday's wisecracks, but in the movie she's little more than an adorning onlooker.

Without question the biggest eye-opening takeaway for me in the screenplay is just how strenuously Kevin pushes the “depraved” label on the Cowboys. My illusions about “nuance” and “shadings” got put to rest right from the start with this now-deleted definition of Cowboy—“an insult implying deviant sexuality.”

From there follows a palpable homoerotic undercurrent amongst the cowpokes, almost as though they were a crew of “gay caballeros” and Curly Bill's frequent protective arm around the shoulder of “Sister Boy” Breakenridge (Jason Priestly) suggests they may have strayed off to Brokeback Mountain a time or two. This “sexual depravity” element feels like a dead horse the screenplay insists on flogging, one of several the film didn't need or use.

Clearly, then, no one has a monopoly when it comes to myth-making and truth-bending; there's a veritable glory hole of it surrounding tales of *Tombstone*. I didn't realize how in my “misremembering,” I'd mythologized Kevin Jarre's screenplay into something he never intended it to be. Kevin very much followed the *Liberty Valance* dictum that “when legend becomes fact, print the legend.” The movie that emerged after his departure is a boiled-down version of what was always in the screenplay and not some compromised artistic vision. The irony is in no way lost on me that for months now I've been advocating for a greater embrace of “the truth about *Tombstone*” while at the same time remaining so oblivious to the truth about something I should have known all along. Wouldn't be the first time.



BY MELODY GROVES

TAMER OF RATON PASS

“UNCLE DICK” WOOTTON

HELPED BUILD A NATION

WITH HIS SANTA FE TRAIL

TOLL ROAD.

Well past midnight, everyone in the wagon train was snoring. First night on guard duty, teenager Dick Wootton spotted a stealthily approaching shadow in the chest-high grass. Convinced Indians were about to attack, he propped the large-bore rifle against his shoulder, sighted down the barrel and pulled the trigger. The shadow dropped. Heart pounding, he knew tonight would be memorable since he single-handedly had saved the entire Bent/St. Vrain wagon train from certain death. Except it wasn't a sneaking Indian. The lead mule, Jake, had wandered off and was simply returning to camp. Wootton never did live that down.

In 1836, he began a lifetime as a frontiersman, adventurer, trapper, guide and businessman. Always seeking adventure, “Uncle Dick” Wootton is best known as the tamer of Raton Pass. Wootton fought and traded with Indians, trapped and scouted the Western half of the country. He led wagon trains, herded buffalo, cattle and sheep, farmed and ranched and ran a stage stop in Trinidad, Colorado. He also constructed and operated a toll road across the mountains from Trinidad to Willow Springs (now Raton), New Mexico.

Born Richens Lacy Wootton on May 6, 1816, in Virginia, he was seven when the family moved to Kentucky. At age 17, Richens moved in with an uncle on a Mississippi cotton plantation. But he needed more excitement. Within two years he moved to Independence,



“Uncle Dick” Wootton, born Richens Lacy Wootton in Virginia in 1816, went west on the Santa Fe Trail at the age of 20. He became one of the trail's most important entrepreneurs and promoters after he settled at the base of Raton Pass and built the first practical wagon and stage toll road on the mountain route of the transcontinental trail.

True West Archives

Missouri, and signed on as a wagon man. For years he hauled freight for the firm of William and Charles Bent and Ceran St. Vrain, crossing the Great Plains via the Santa Fe Trail. On that first trip, men mistook his name as Richard, so he became Dick. He acquired “Uncle” years later in Denver when he tapped two barrels of his Taos Lightning for appreciative miners.

Raton Pass

Through the years, he successfully achieved many firsts, including opening a hotel, restaurant and dry goods at a Colorado gold camp, in what is now Denver. But he'd harbored a desire grander than that.

His many trips from Pueblo, Colorado, south into Fort Union and Santa Fe, New Mexico, had proven that a better, faster, safer road was vital to traffic on the Santa Fe Trail. This route was a commerce highway opened by merchant William Becknell who correctly foresaw profits being made in transporting American goods across prairies to appreciative customers in Mexico's frontier. He used heavy Murphy freight wagons, and within a short time the Santa Fe trade ballooned into a million-dollar-a-year business.

The first official Santa Fe Trail route was surveyed in 1825 by U.S. military patrols, so by the time Wootton took that initial freight wagon train across in 1836, the trail was well-used. Travel had blossomed once Spain, which would not trade with the U.S., lost ownership of Mexico



1. Court House.
2. School House.
3. Post Office.
4. Water Works.
5. Reservoir.
6. A. T. & S. F. H. Depot.
7. A. T. & S. F. Round House.
8. Jaffa's Opera House.
9. Mitchell's Hall.
10. Gas Works.
11. Sadler/Harrison M.F., F. Burkhard & Co., Prop's.
12. Rocky Mountain Flour Mill, Bensen Bros., Prop's.
13. Trinidad City Mill, Jose A. Robarte, Prop.
14. Flaming Mill, F. H. Keith, Prop.



- X-- Masonic and Odd Fellows Hall.
- A-- Methodist Episcopal Church.
- B-- Methodist Episcopal South Church.
- C-- Presbyterian Church.
- D-- Roman Catholic Church.
- E-- Roman Catholic Convent.
- F-- Bank of Southern Colorado, S. T. Collins, Cashier.
- G-- First National Bank.
- H-- Trinidad Daily News, Olney Sewell, Editor and Prop.
- K-- Trinidad Democrat, H. E. Cutting, Editor and Prop.
- L-- Brewery, Henry Schneider, Prop.
- M-- Baker House, Geo. W. Baker, Prop.
- N-- Trinidad Hotel, Chas. Rose, Prop.
- O-- Grand Union Hotel.
- P-- United States Hotel.

NORTH SIDE.

TRINIDAD, COLO.

1882.

COUNTY SIXTH OF LAS ANIMAS COUNTY

Population 2860.

Copyright 1882 by J. J. Stone, Warren, Pa.

Hibbing, Coal Mine 2 1/2 Miles out.
 Nelson Park, 900 feet above level of the sea.
 Trinidad, 6000 " " " " " "
 Simpson's Hot, 7600 feet above level of the sea.

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 JUL 31 1882
 No. 12,633
 CITY OF WASHINGTON

G. & M. W. Co.
 MAR 1975
 Library of Congress

in 1821. Trade increased further in 1848 when the Southwest came under American rule after the Mexican War. Travel and trade from Franklin, Missouri, to Santa Fe exploded. In May 1849, the first stagecoach line began monthly service between Independence, Missouri, and Santa Fe.

Building the Pass Wouldn't be Easy

The 7,834-foot Raton Pass, named for imposing Raton Peak, was considered an obstacle to avoid at almost any cost. Most Santa Fe Trail traders chose the shorter, more level and faster Cimarron Route, despite the threat of Indian and Texian attacks. However, the severe lack of water on that route turned many travelers to The Pass. Since 1821, when Becknell hauled the first wagon destined for Santa Fe over The Pass, the difficulty remained legendary.

Susan Magoffin, traveling with her Army husband and one of the first women to traverse

The Pass, wrote in 1846: "Worse and worse the road! They are taking the mules from the carriage this p.m. and half a dozen men, by bodily exertions, are lowering them down the cliffling hills. And it takes a dozen men to steady a wagon with all its wheels locked... We came to camp about half an hour after dusk, having accomplished the great travel of six or eight hundred yards during the day."

Getting through the mountains was critical. During the Civil War, Raton Pass proved to be an important link between the Southwest and the Union, especially from 1861-62. Fear of Confederate raiders from Texas and increased Indian hostilities had forced a virtual abandonment of the exposed Cimarron Cutoff. It was through The Pass, shielded by the Rocky Mountains, that freighters continued to supply food and munitions to the isolated Union troops in New Mexico.

Taming the trail, which began as an Indian route, was no small feat. Wootton wrote in his memoir, "The hills are broken, rock-bound and

Dick Wootton plied the Santa Fe Trail back and forth across Raton Pass long before the founding of Trinidad, Colorado, in 1862. Thirty-one years later, at the time of Wootton's death in 1893, Trinidad had become an important commercial crossroad in the West.

Courtesy Library of Congress

ragged. Some are brown and bare; others are covered with a thick growth of shrub oak, piñon and mesquite, while there are still others crowned with groves of always verdant pine." Narrow, wooded valleys were sprinkled throughout. It was almost impossible for anything but saddle horses and pack animals to travel the route at any time, and impassable for wagon trains or stagecoaches in winter.

Following his dream of building a useful road, in 1865 Wootton received charters from both New Mexico and Colorado territories to



In 1865, Dick Wootton (center) posed with two of Santa Fe, New Mexico's, leading citizens—Ceran St. Vrain (left), and Jose Maria Valdez. St. Vrain had hired Wootton nearly two decades earlier, and Territorial legislator Valdez was Kit Carson's brother-in-law.

Courtesy Palace of the Governors Photo Archives, New Mexico History Museum, Santa Fe, New Mexico

build one. In spring 1866, he moved his family to Raton Pass and chose a site for his house—the bottom of the steepest part on the Colorado side.

Wootton hired engineers and surveyors. As most local men thought the work too hard, he employed a tribe of Utes under Chief Conniach. The Indians, using hard physical labor, improved 27 miles of the toughest part of the road. "I had undertaken no light task, I can assure you," Wootton wrote. "There were hillsides to cut down, rocks to blast and remove, bridges to build by the score. I built the road, however, and made it a good one, too."

Taking a Toll

Needing some way to pay for the construction and, of course, to make a profit, Wootton established it as a toll road. He charged \$1.50 for one wagon, 25 cents per horseman, five cents per head of livestock. There were two exemptions to the toll. Indians passed through for free because Wootton knew they wouldn't understand why they should pay to pass through their own area, and, after all, the Utes had helped build the road. Lawmen chasing

In an undated photo, Uncle Dick Wootton posed with family members next to their Colorado house at the base of Raton Pass. Wootton's controversial toll gate entrance to his road was adjacent to his house.

Courtesy NPS.gov

fugitives were also exempt. A time or two Wootton even helped authorities by reporting who had passed through.

Travel on Wootton's toll road increased in November 1867 when gold was discovered in New Mexico's Moreno Valley and a daily Barlow and Sanderson stage route was established. Although Wootton kept no accounts of the receipts from his road, his partner George C. McBride did. Between April 1, 1869, and April 1, 1870, McBride recorded receiving \$9,196.64 (\$185,952 in today's dollars).

As stagecoaches began to rumble through the pass, Wootton quickly converted the house into a hotel, restaurant and bar. "You couldn't run a stage station without a bar," he wrote, "so I had one." Many evenings were spent around the fireplace with Wootton telling stories of his wilder days and stage passengers relating their latest scary traveling tales. The hotel became

NAVIGATING THE PASS

Today, the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway rolls over Wootton's pass. Interstate 25 often parallels the train route. An early Raton Pass road built for autos and parts of the original SFT can be traveled by heading up Moulton Avenue in Raton. The street makes a sharp left, then bends right and starts up a switchback road to the top of the mesa. The road is barricaded about halfway with no access to the private property on the other side. The pavement is in poor repair and because there are no guard rails, the drive should not be attempted lightly. Photos of Model Ts with gravity gas tanks backing up The Pass are on display at the Raton Museum.



The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company's rail line through Raton Pass in 1878 made Uncle Dick Wootton's toll road obsolete, but Wootton and his descendants made out well in his savvy deal with the railway company.

Courtesy Kansas Historical Society

so popular, people from Trinidad and El Morro held dances there every week.

One of the ranches next to Wootton's belonged to Scottish immigrants—the Smith brothers, William, Hugh and John, who went by the monikers Poke, Hoke and Joke. Wootton, the Smiths and neighboring ranchers rounded up their herds into Tin Pan Canyon, then sorted them out to brand them. One of Poke's sons often acted as designated driver for Wootton when he wanted to go into Trinidad and have a "gay ol' time." The Smith teenager would wait outside the saloon with a buggy and then haul an inebriated Uncle Dick home safely.

And Then the Railroad Came

In 1878, progress came knocking at his door. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad offered to buy Wootton's toll road right-of-way through Raton Pass.

Uncle Dick realized he was no longer the spry man he'd been. "The railroad took the place of the stage line," he reminisced. "And since that time, I have lived in a different atmosphere from that in which I formerly lived. I almost feel I am no longer on the frontier and that there is no frontier to go to."

Reluctantly, he agreed to sell his toll road and move to Trinidad. Initially, the railroad offered him \$50,000 (\$1.3 million in today's dollars), but he turned down the deal, asking instead for only \$1, unrestricted train travel for his wife and him, and grocery money for his wife's lifetime. They agreed on \$25 per month for Maria Pauline Lujan Wootton, 40 years his junior. After Uncle Dick's death in 1893 at age 77, Maria continued receiving the agreed-upon benefits. In 1925 the Santa Fe Railroad doubled the payments and in 1930 increased them to \$75. After Mrs. Wootton's death in 1935, an invalid daughter received \$25 a month during her lifetime.

It wasn't until 1980 that the two-story ranch house at the base of The Pass was torn down. Over his lifetime, Dick Wootton married at least four times and sired 20 children. He outlived all but one wife and three children. He is buried in Trinidad, Colorado.



New Mexico native **Melody Groves** loves the area where she grew up. Exploring ghost towns and riding horses sparked her Wild West imagination. Winner of numerous writing awards, she writes Western fiction and nonfiction.



In 1911, drivers between Trinidad, Colorado, and Raton, New Mexico (in background), braved the switchbacks over improved portions of Uncle Dick Wootton's toll road.

Courtesy NARA, Box_271_30-n-02401

BY SHERRY MONAHAN

CHILE Queens

For two centuries, locals and visitors to the public plazas of San Antonio, Texas, dined on the famous fiery cuisine.

San Antonio, Texas, became famous for its “Chile Queens” in the late 1800s and early 20th century, but historians believe the renowned local cuisine was prepared and sold publicly in the Mission City as early as 200 years ago. Over time, the locations changed, but in the mid- to late-1800s chile con carne stands at Military Plaza offered Mexican specialties. Spicy aromas scented the air, women called from their carts in Spanish and English to attract customers, and music filled the plaza. In this wondrous culinary scene people dined on tamales, enchiladas, eggs, beans and chile con carne.

While other Texas cities had chile con carne stands, none were like San Antonio's. Journalists informed their readers that no trip to San Antonio would be complete without a stop at one of the chile queen stands. While the term “chile queen” conjured up tasty thoughts of visiting San Antonio, the term was also applied to fallen women of Hispanic descent. Fort Worth had its own “chile queen,” named Susie Barton, who worked in Hell's Half Acre. Although Susie might have been spicy, it wasn't because she sold chiles...if you know what I mean.

There were three classes of queens, according to the *San Antonio Light* in 1892. The first type acted out of necessity, was from the countryside, and probably had run away from home and needed work. Next

was the Mexican senorita, whose parents likely owned the stand and were nearing retirement. Lastly, there was the true queen, who was raised in the art of deception and was generally known to be “fly” or flippant. The true queen was between 16 and 20 years old, generally good looking, nicely dressed and polite. The girls worked from 8 p.m. and remained at their stands until the wee hours of the morning. They earned a dollar or a dollar fifty per day, and the “most educated in their business” made 20 to 35 dollars per week, according to the article.

Sadie Thornhill-Rosenbaum was well-known as the “queen of queens” because of her cooking talent, beauty and vivaciousness. Before her chile queen reign, she appeared on the stage. In 1895 *Forest and Stream* recalled dinner at Sadie's during her tenure: “If Sadie be not one of the features of interest of San Antonio and one of the leading citizens of town, to what or to whom shall we ascribe that honor? Of course a chile supper at Sadie's casa was to be the close of ceremonies in San Antonio. Sadie was going to give us this supper herself, but we couldn't allow that. Sadie was



In the 1870s–80s, the “Chile Queens” of San Antonio sold their famously popular homemade Mexican dishes at the city's Military Plaza from dawn to dusk.

Courtesy NYPL Digital Collections / Illustration by Bob Boze Bell

still doing business at the old stand, and so was her Mexican cook Pancho. ‘Pancho is so funny when he's drunk,’ said Sadie, philosophically.” The story went on to note that when Pancho wasn't under the weather from “aguardiente” aka liquor, he cooked



the best eggs, chile con carne and other delights.

When the men from *Forest and Stream* departed from Sadie's stand, she bid them adios and pinned a fresh flower to a buttonhole on each of their suits. They concluded, "Sadie is not to be misunderstood. She is simply unique, the last type of vanishing class which has

no precedents, which summons no comparison, and needs no comment. After this, where else in all the world shall one buy his chile supper!" Sadie was the charming hostess of the chile stand, and they considered her the last in a long dynasty of chile queens. No other stand compared to hers, but alas, marriage interrupted the celebration of taste buds from her stand. In 1892 Mrs. Sadie M. Thornhill was the last queen at 304 Alamo Plaza, and in 1894 she married Frank Swales and her reign ended. Sadly, so did her marriage when Frank abandoned her in 1897, and she went back to calling herself Thornhill, which is how old-timers recalled her in their stories.

Marta Garcia, another early queen, was a tall, slender, black-eyed seniorita who was second only to Sadie. Other queens included Rosa, Ella and Jovita, who served many customers on the plazas. Jovita was remembered for her small stature and quaint calls of "*un medio tamales y chile gravy, un plata chile con carne y frijoles.*" She also called, "*Dame dos blanquillos y chile gravy y metrais dos tortillas tostada.*" She asked if anyone wanted an order of tamales with chile sauce, a plate of chile con carne with beans, or eggs with chile sauce and toasted tortillas. Other women included Mrs. Rosaria Spania and Teresa Gonzalez. On a June evening in 1986, Marta and Teresa were arrested for fighting and abusive language, but the recorder later dismissed the case.

Not all the queens were of Mexican descent; others included Agnes Pearson, sisters Rose



In the 1880s, San Antonio's Military Plaza was a vibrant open market where local farmers sold fruit and vegetables. In 1889, City Hall was built on the popular plaza, and the market and chile queens moved first to Market Square and later to Milam Park and Haymarket Plaza.

Photos Courtesy University of the Incarnate Word, Frank Jennings Collection



Customers are seen chowing down at chile queens' white linen tablecloth-covered tables at Market Square in San Antonio, date unknown, but most likely pre-World War I based on the popular summer-style straw boater hats the men eating chile are wearing.

and Lulu Davis, and Jennie Johnson. Some of these queens were also employed at the variety theater, where they got a little disorderly at times. Jennie was 17 years old and was often in the company of another teen named Lillie Atkinson. In 1892 the two were living on Concho Street with Lulu Davis and, likely, Rose Davis. Lillie and Lulu were arrested in September that year for being drunk and disorderly. It was soon learned neither had parents and that they had grown up on the streets. The city was perplexed as to what to do with them. The following year, Lillie and Jennie gave up their chile business and began running the streets at night. Seen drinking beer and being raucous, they were arrested as vagrants.

Because of the unsanitary conditions at some of the chile stands, the city opened and closed them over the years. In April 1896, the *San Antonio Express* grew frustrated over the closing of the chile stands and urged the city council to allow the re-establishment of them. They suggested the council require a license for all stands, with a nominal fee, so

they could be regulated. If a stand was found to be unsanitary or disorderly, then the city could revoke their license. The newspaper reported: "The most potent step in connection with the first requirement would be the dethronement of the 'Chile Queens.'"

The following year the talented senioritas were back, and that same newspaper ran a glorious story about them. It reported that tourists, after seeing the Alamo, must partake of a Mexican supper served by the chile queens. It reported, "This was in the late '80s, the palmy days of the chile queens, when their fame had spread... they were idealized as stunning creatures, with rich, brown skins of the tropics and languorous grace and bewitching black eyes of Spanish donnas." According to the story, there were six senioritas, and one called to

her server, "*Jesus, andale, dos platos de chile con carne, y dos tamales can chile gravy, de enchiladas tortillas, y dos tazas de café.*" She called for two plates of chile con carne, two tamales with gravy, enchiladas and two cups of coffee. The article continued: "The fiercely burning chile con carne agonizes the tourist, [who] manages to struggle through the tamales by drinking a great deal of water." The article went on to say that, by the 1890s, the fame of the original queens faded as they were forced to leave the backdrop of the Alamo. They continued on, but it was never quite the same without the majestic background.

Author William Brann, who lived in Texas, wrote about the chile queens in 1898. He stated, "We must have several days—and nights—for

A San Antonio chile queen and her family awaited customers at their table in Haymarket Plaza in the Mission City in 1904.

Courtesy University of Texas at San Antonio Special Collections



sight-seeing in San Antonio. We must dream about the ruined missions where, before our grand-sires' day, the savage was taught to humble himself before the sacred cross; about the Alamo, that charnel house of chivalry. We will be shown a dozen different places where Bowie bled and Crockett died; but no matter—it's all holy ground. We must have a Mexican supper in the open air and a talk with the chile queens. We must have hot tamales, with ice cold beer on the side to temper the internal fires, listen to the music in Alamo Plaza and witness the Battle of Flowers.”

The Daily Express wrote, “Nearly all of the queens and vendors of the ‘hot stuff’ will move... Although the chile stands have been moved from their plazas in the past ten years, they have lost none of their attractiveness, and the quality of the tamales and other edibles remains as good as in the past.”

The chile queens remained on the Military Plaza, but moved to various locations through the years as the city progressed. Later, the chile stands lined Pasquale Square, but in January 1900, they had to move to make way for progress. Nearly all of them moved to East Street, between Commerce and Buena Vista. It was also around this time that the word “chile” was changed to “chili.”

The stands were closed again, but in 1904 the San Antonio Women’s Club reintroduced their “chili queens” back to the plazas after they were closed again for health reasons. Each Wednesday evening the women offered chili, tamales and tortillas served under the old torch lights under the stars. The chili queens appeared again in 1916 on Alamo Plaza, and the newspaper noted, “Beginning this week, she will serve chili and frijoles in the good old way from open-air stands. This practice, having been discontinued because of demands for

sanitation and progress will be restored by the Women’s club.” In 1925 the chili queens appeared again, but this time on Haymarket Plaza and offered a nightly rendezvous of “chili victuals al fresco” that included tamales and enchiladas.

While the true glory days of the queens happened in the 1800s, the queens and their stands lasted until the 1930s. In 1938, a headline in the *San Antonio Light* read, “S.A. Plaza Chili Queens Still Reign.” The article noted that while the queens remained, their domains were greatly reduced, and they were also now called “Baratillos,” which were individual kitchens housed in a large building and each offering their own fare. By 1939, San Antonio’s mayor wanted to bring back the days of old with open-air chile stands. In 1940, the *San Antonio Light* wrote, “Alfred Rodriguez is said to be infusing the forlorn chile queen crowds with the same hoop-la that characterized their opening season last summer. His simple trick is to mass the troubadours and have jam sessions with Mexican canciones.” Seeing the need, Mayor Maury Maverick said, “If we can get the chili queens back on the plaza, it will revive one of San Antonio’s most romantic and colorful mementos of the past...” A committee was formed and some chili stands appeared on Haymarket Plaza, but they were short-lived, and by 1941, they

faced the same sanitation issue as in the past, and that was the last revival of the queens.



Sherry Monahan has been researching and sharing the culinary history of the American West for over 20 years. She feels that the food and beverages people enjoyed and survived on tell a great deal about the people. Regional dishes emerged, classics were reinvented and native dishes were introduced to pioneers.

CHILE VS. CHILI

The word chile refers to the pepper itself when it's spelled with an “e” at the end. If it's spelled chili, with an “i” at the end, it refers to the dish of meat and chile peppers. The spelling differences also spilled over when it came to the Chile Queens. In the 1800s, the spelling was tied to the actual chile itself. It later changed to reflect the dish, chili. Add to that simple misspellings, and the word is interchanged during the 1800s and 1900s. By 1904, the word chili began replacing chile when referring to the queens. Today, both words are used to describe these colorful women of San Antonio's past.

BY CANDY MOULTON

Rocky Mountain Bonanzas

Explore mining history from Cripple Creek to Grand Encampment.

It happened all across the West: a spark from a stove or fireplace set one wooden frame building on fire, and with dry wood, lack of firefighting resources and sometimes wind, the spark often led to a conflagration that could take out many adjacent buildings, even entire business districts. Cripple Creek was one of the most prosperous mining towns in Colorado by 1896, when not one but two devastating fires swept through the town. They happened in April, just four days apart.

The first blaze started in the middle of the town's central business district at the Central Dance Hall, on April 25, 1896. The blaze began at about 1 a.m. and spread quickly when the volunteer firefighters ran out of water. Before long, other gambling and parlor houses had been consumed by flames, and other buildings were demolished when firefighters used explosives to blow them up while trying to stop the path of the fire. By 5 a.m., the fire was out, but the devastation was widespread. More than 300 buildings were destroyed and two people died.

The mining community had barely accepted the reality of the fire damage, when on April 29 a kitchen fire at the Portland Hotel quickly consumed the hotel and spread to other businesses including the Booth Furniture Store, El Paso Lumber Yard and the Harder Grocery store.

Both fires were accelerated by the dynamite stored in buildings throughout the town, which led to bigger, more devastating fire activity. In the second fire, a 700-pound dynamite stockpile at the grocery store certainly contributed to an increase in destruction.

When the ashes in the second fire had settled, Cripple Creek realized that more than a thousand houses had been destroyed, and



The hard rock miners of Grand Encampment, Wyoming, worked deep underground in the Ferris Haggarty Mine. The ore was elevated out of the mine on ore cars that traveled 16 miles on the gravity-powered Ferris-Haggarty tramway (the world's largest, from 1902 to 1908) to the smelter in Riverside.

Courtesy Grand Encampment Museum

about 5,000 people were homeless. The destruction of the business district covered some 40 blocks, and the total damage was estimated at \$3 million. The number of people who died isn't clear, but certainly there were two deaths in the first fire and at least four in the second. The number of explosions and the extreme fire conditions made it impossible to truly know whether there were more victims.

Cripple Creek Rebuilds

Miners and mining camp residents began rebuilding almost immediately, often using brick rather than wood as a key component of new structures, because the fires didn't have an effect on the mines. The mining activity at Cripple Creek had started with the El Paso mining claim filed by Bob Womack on October 20, 1890. His ore assayed at \$250 in gold per ton, and the run

After copper was discovered in Wyoming's Sierra Madres in 1897, Grand Encampment and the Ferris Haggarty Mine were founded. Today, the Grand Encampment Museum celebrates the history of the mining camp and surrounding region.

Photos Courtesy Grand Encampment Museum



Visitors to Cripple Creek will enjoy a four-mile roundtrip back to yesteryear on the Cripple Creek & Victor Narrow Gauge Railroad. The popular historic train runs its route every 70 minutes from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m., mid-May to mid-September or early October.

Courtesy Pikes Peak Region Attractions



was on. Within a decade, miners pulled more than \$18 million in gold from nearly 500 mining properties in the Cripple Creek District.

Today, the Cripple Creek Heritage Center's displays highlight the history of this gold camp. During the summer, tours are available of the historic Mollie Kathleen Mine. Nearby Victor also has a rich mining heritage. Learn more at the Victor Lowell Thomas Museum.

In its heyday, the district had three railroads and two electric trolley systems. The "Gold Belt Line" narrow-gauge Florence and Cripple Creek Railroad linked the gold camp with Florence, Colorado, by climbing through Phantom Canyon. You can drive the route of this old railroad by taking the Phantom Canyon Road, but be forewarned, it is steep, narrow and not for anyone who dislikes heights, one-lane roads with two-way traffic or blind corners! For adventurers, however, it is an awesome drive.

North to Wyoming

As you travel north from Cripple Creek through Kremmling and Walden, Colorado, you are on a route speculators and miners took when they abandoned Cripple Creek after the devastating 1896 fires to find their luck at the next big strike: the discovery of copper in what became the Grand Encampment Mining District.

Edward Haggarty herded sheep, but his primary interest in the Sierra Madre range of southern Wyoming was the search for minerals, and on a spring day in 1896, he found the

mother lode—a copper deposit that would be developed as the Rudefeha Mine (named for the men who backed his mining work—Rumsey, Deal, Ferris and Haggarty). In May of 1897, the word was out, and men who had rushed north from Cripple Creek staked the town of Grand Encampment at the foot of the mountains. Miners and boomers came quickly—many of them like Milt Englehart and Edward Parkison from Cripple Creek. They opened stores to serve the mining industry and brought newspaperman Grant Jones up from Cripple Creek as well.

Jones took over the promotion of the area, quickly getting articles placed in newspapers from Philadelphia to Denver.

Jones would ultimately open his own paper, the *Dillon Doublejack*, published in the town that grew closest to the mine. In addition to the Rudefeha Mine (which later became the Ferris-Haggarty), other copper mines were quickly developed and spawned the towns Battle, Copperton, Elwood and Rambler.

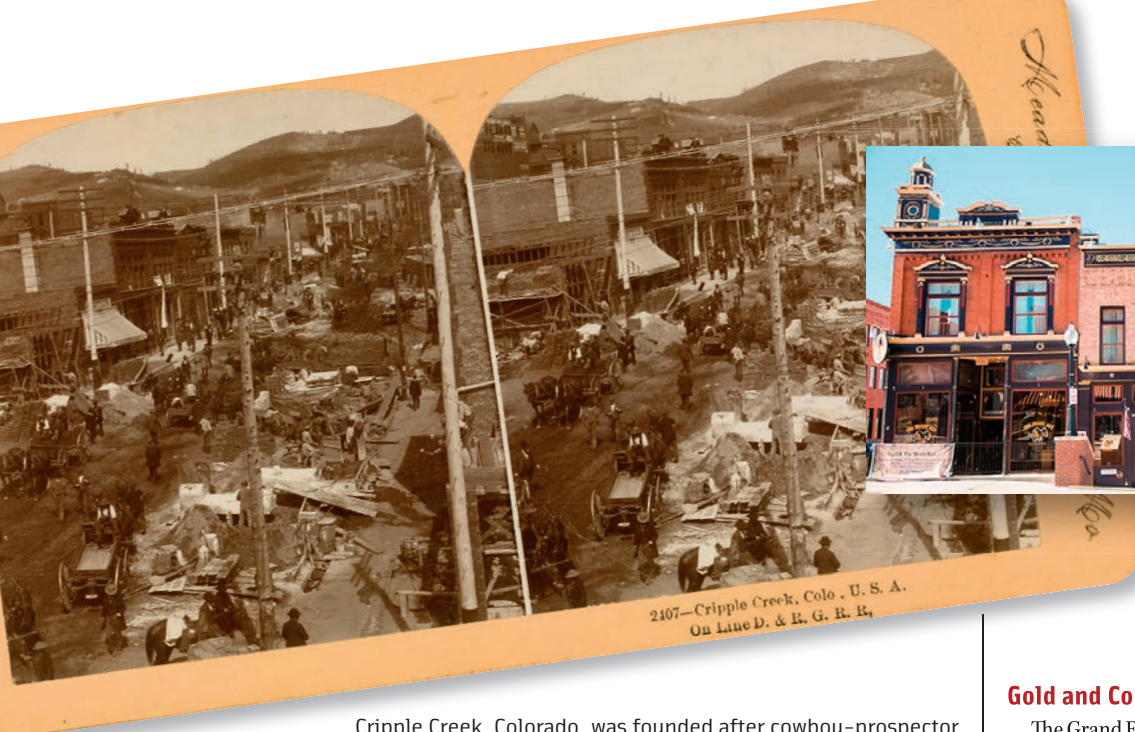
Copper Camp Heyday

From its founding in 1897 until 1908, Grand Encampment was the hub of the copper district. Stagecoach service provided a link to the Union Pacific Railroad at Walcott Junction, 40 miles to the north. Freighters like Gee String Jack Fulkerson hauled goods to the mines and

mining camps and returned to the North American Copper Company smelter with loads of copper ore. But that transportation was difficult—both costly and dangerous. So the company hired the Riblet Tramway Company from the Pacific Northwest to build a 16-mile-long aerial tramway that could transport the ore from the Ferris-Haggarty to the smelter that had been constructed along the Grand Encampment River near the town. This engineering marvel was the longest aerial tramway in the world at the time. It operated from June 1903 until August 1908.

Grand Encampment never suffered a major town fire in its heyday, but the smelter that was so essential to production of the copper ore had three blazes. The first in 1906 caused a temporary suspension of work, but the plant was repaired and smelting resumed. Then two more fires in the spring of 1908 caused more extensive damage and rendered the smelter inoperable. By then the price of copper had dropped to a level that made it impractical to rebuild the smelter, and the copper boom went bust shortly thereafter.

The railroad that town promoters had worked to attract and build arrived in town too late to be used for the transportation of any



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Gold and Copper Heritage

The Grand Encampment Museum interprets the history of the Grand Encampment Mining District. The museum has a new diorama depicting the 16-mile-long aerial tramway as well as one of the original tramway towers, plus three replica towers that have original cable and ore buckets. Also on the grounds at the museum are original buildings from the town of Battle, homestead and stagecoach cabins, a

Cripple Creek, Colorado, was founded after cowboy-pro prospector Bob Womack discovered gold in 1890. In 1896, the city's 10,000 residents had to rebuild twice after two major fires swept through the boomtown.

Historic Image Courtesy NYPL Digital Collections/Cripple Creek Photo Courtesy Pikes Peak Region Attractions

copper ore, but the Saratoga & Encampment Railway (the S&E called the "Slow and Easy") served the community for nearly seven decades

providing both passenger service and hauling freight, primarily livestock being shipped to and from markets like Omaha and Chicago.

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Today Cripple Creek and Encampment could not be more different. Cripple Creek is one of the Colorado towns that allows casino gambling, so it is still a bit of a booming place; its close proximity to Denver and Colorado Springs also ensures a busy atmosphere. Encampment's economy is now supported by ranching and tourism, but it is far enough off the beaten path that it has retained its very small-town atmosphere. Both are high mountain towns. Cripple Creek is at an elevation of over 9,400 feet, and Encampment is over 7,300 feet, so in both places you will definitely get to breathe some Rocky Mountain air (even if it is thin at such elevations). ❖

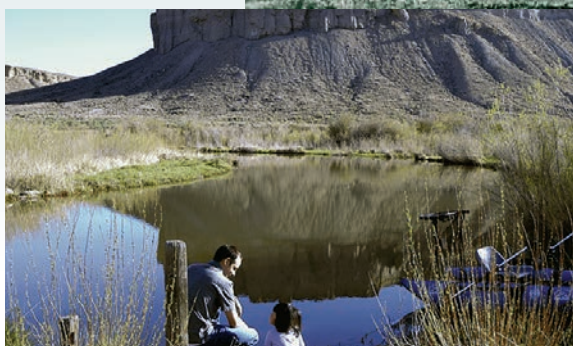
Candy Moulton is the author of *Roadside History of Colorado* and *The Grand Encampment: Settling the High Country*.

HERITAGE PARK MUSEUM

Ranching near Kremmling, Colorado, is not for the faint of heart since the mountain town receives its fair share of snow every winter. When the Woford Mountain Reservoir construction began, it was apparent some historic ranching structures would be affected, and that led residents to move them from their original locations to the Heritage Park Museum. Among the historic structures at the museum are the Hermitage Ranch House, the MacElroy Livery and the town's railroad depot.

GOOD EATS AND SLEEPS

GOOD GRUB: *Home Café*, Cripple Creek, CO; *The Creek Restaurant and Bar*, Cripple Creek, CO; *River Rock*, Walden, CO; *Crazy Moose*, Walden, CO; *The Bear Trap*, Riverside, WY; *The Divide*, Encampment, WY
GOOD LODGING: *Carr Manor*, Cripple Creek, CO; *Spirit West River Lodge*, Riverside, WY; *Lazy Acres RV Park & Motel*, Riverside, WY



A tour of Kremmling, Colorado's, Heritage Park Museum will introduce visitors to the history and natural wonders of Grand County, Colorado.

Photos Courtesy Visit Grand County Colorado Tourism

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BY SHERRY MONAHAN

New Mexico Chiles

Ever since Don Juan Oñate brought the fiery fruit to Nuevo Mexico in 1598, the chile pepper has defined cuisine in the Land of Enchantment.



The Spanish introduced Mexican peppers and chile peppers to New Mexico and the American Southwest in the late 16th century, which revolutionized Indigenous cooking among the Pueblo people, including the Hopis.

Photos Courtesy NYPL Digital Collections

New Mexico's food history is heavily influenced by its people, including the Hopis and other Native tribes as well as the Mexican people. Red, and later green, chiles played a large role in the local cuisine. Dishes like green chile stew, chile con carne, chile rellenos and posole are some of the most popular dishes enjoyed then and now.

In 1874 the *Las Vegas Gazette* listed New Mexico's natural agricultural resources, which included grapes, corn, barley, beans, pinon nuts, onions and chiles. The article noted that the chile or pod pepper was of excellent quality and was grown all over the state. "It is said to excel in quality that raised any where in the States, on account of its mild nature, and is extensively used in cookery as a standard dish."

Newspapers, like the *Albuquerque Morning Democrat* listed a weekly market review to allow its readers to see what was available. An 1895 list included butter, cream cheese, eggs, olives, lemons, ground red chile pepper and whole ground red chile pepper. Green chiles also were sold at the local markets in the late 1800s. They were so prolific on Theodore Roualt's Las Cruces garden that he canned some as an experiment. He processed them at Mesilla Valley Canning Factory, where

he already was canning tomatoes. He stated that canning the peeled peppers preserved their flavor, and in 1898, he put up several hundred cases. They were a huge success and he sold almost the entire lot, so he planned on canning over 4,000 cases in 1899. In 1905 when a rival Los Angeles cannery claimed it was the first to can Mexican peeled green chiles, Roualt objected to the claim and stated that he was the first person to can them.

Green chiles were used in a variety of dishes, but green chile con carne was a popular dish in the late 1800s. It was served at many restaurants, including the Bon Ton in Santa Fe. The restaurant received chiles from Blas Sandoval of Pena Blanca, who brought his wagons to town and sold them to the owners. The local paper noted, "If you want a genuine dish of green chile con carne, go to the Bon Ton restaurant, where they are experts at the business." They also sold tamales, enchiladas, fresh mountain trout, chicken, posole, chile verde, menudo, chicharrones and "any other Mexican or Spanish dish ever heard of."

As the turn-of-the-century neared, Mesilla Valley had grown into a chile-producing area where peppers were raised and canned. The local paper noted the peppers were always in

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Bob Wagner Photography

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Drying peppers in the sun against the walls of the adobe homes of the Indian Pueblo communities, as seen here in Isleta, New Mexico, in 1940, is a centuries-old tradition that continues today across the state and everywhere in the world where peppers are grown and dried.

demand, and the canning was very profitable. It reported, "Last year we imported large quantities of the large Mexican peppers in cans, which are quite spicy."

One man, whose last name was Barnes, shared his thoughts on chiles, but not about their spice. While spending some time in the Socorro jail, Mr. Barnes claimed the chiles caused his consumption disease. The local paper noted in jest, "Let some able chemist analyze red pepper at once."

Chiles are also used in chile rellenos and huevos rancheros. This is an old recipe from La Fonda in Santa Fe. ★

CHILES RELLENOS A LA KONRAD

8 roasted green chile peppers
1 egg, beaten
½ cup grated aged Monterey Jack cheese
Butter • ½ cup flour

Place roasted peppers in a bowl and cover with plastic wrap; let them sit until soft. When cool enough to handle, remove the skins. Make a slit in one side from top to bottom and remove the seeds. Fill each chile pepper with 1 tablespoon grated cheese. Roll in flour, dip in beaten egg, roll again in flour. Brown in butter.

Adapted from Chef Konrad Allgaier's recipe, which appeared in the *Super Chief Cookbook of Famous Fred Harvey Recipes* (1948).

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

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CHEYENNE COUNTY

The Silver King

A new biography of George Hearst, plus a new bio of James K.P. Miller, a multigenerational women's story, a history of poker in the West and a new Western from Michael Punke.

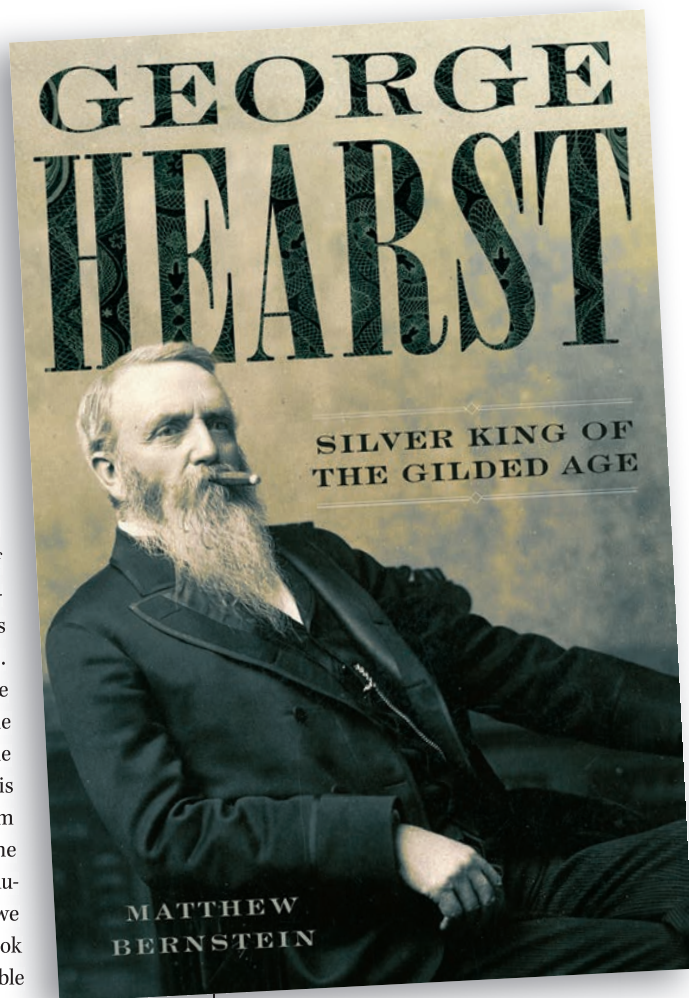
I grew up reading the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, the afternoon foil to the *Los Angeles Times*, the well-read morning paper. Growing up in Southern California, we all knew of the legendary William Randolph Hearst, Hearst Castle and Orson Welles's classic semi-disguised biopic, *Citizen Kane*. We also had a front row seat to the debacle of Patty Hearst's kidnapping and the despicable Symbionese Liberation Army. The Hearst Corporation was still one of the omnipresent media empires in America in the 1970s, and it was as well-known as the three major networks. But what was not known and what was left out of the grammar school and high school lesson plans was the life history of William Randolph Hearst's father, George. We learned of many of the other "Robber Barons," or "Gilded Age Entrepreneurs," but interestingly enough, the older Hearst was forgotten. Maybe because he did not live well into the 20th century or because his son quickly usurped his father's fame with the Hearst newspaper empire and personal scandals, George Hearst has been quite overlooked by historians in recent decades. (I don't count the terrible fabrication of character in HBO's *Deadwood*.) Now, California historian Matthew Bernstein has set the record straight with *George Hearst: Silver King of The Gilded Age* (University of Oklahoma Press, \$26.95).

Why is George Hearst important to remember and know in 2022? He truly was a great example of the American Gilded Age frontier

entrepreneurs who seized opportunity, and in so doing built a nation. Far from perfect, Hearst was a man of his era who rose to the greatest heights of any industry he pursued—mining, real estate, politics and even newspapers. Today, 131 years since George Hearst's death, the legacy of the Hearst name is traditionally tied to his son and heir, William Randolph Hearst, and the modern-day Hearst communications empire. But we would be remiss to overlook George Hearst's remarkable life and his life within the greater context of 19th-century American history.

From his Missouri childhood, the parental lessons of hard work and entrepreneurship and a family wanderlust that pushed the Hearst generations forward from Scotland to the American Colonies to new opportunities in the young Republic, Hearst's young life and family set him up to be an American capitalist through and through. He pursued his goals with a vigor that defined the opportunities he seized, exploited, created and built into one of the greatest Gilded Age success stories.

As author Matthew Bernstein writes so eloquently, "Hearst was the most famous miner in



American history. He had made his mark on countless old mining towns, as well as San Francisco, New York City and Washington, D.C. He was known from coast to coast, a wild and vibrant patch in the American crazy quilt—silver, copper and gold, and stained with whiskey." And with Bernstein's biography, Hearst will be remembered again as one of American's greatest 19th-century entrepreneurs—whose vision and tireless work ethic helped build the greatest industrial nation in world history.

—Stuart Rosebrook

Photo by Robert Ray



WINTER IS A GREAT TIME TO CATCH UP ON READING NEWLY ACQUIRED BOOKS AND SCANNING UNIVERSITY CATALOGS FOR MUST READS IN THE NEW YEAR.

The University of Nebraska catalog has a very rich selection for all interests this spring, and I am particularly interested in rereading their Bison Book reissues of Walter Prescott Webb's *The Great Plains* and Mari Sandoz's *The Battle of Little Bighorn*. I also recommend *Birthing the West: Mothers and Midwives in the Rockies and Plains* by Jennifer J. Hill, which adds a missing chapter of reality to life on the frontier.

The University of Oklahoma is publishing two I know I want to read: *American Dude Ranch: A Touch of the Cowboy and the Thrill of the West* by Lynn Downey and new in paperback, *Inkpaduta: Dakota Leader* by Paul N. Beck.

For students of literature, the University of Missouri has just released Gary Scharnhorst's third volume in his epic trilogy on the Hannibal, Missouri, native, *The Life of Mark Twain: The Final Years, 1891-1910*.

Two that go hand-in-hand from the University of New Mexico Press are *The Mexican Chile Pepper Cookbook: The Soul of Mexican Home Cooking* by Dave DeWitt & José C. Marmolejo (for more on New Mexico chiles, see Frontier Fare p. 66) and *Tucumcari Tonite! A Story of Railroads, Route 66, and the Waning of a Western Town* by David H. Stratton.

Makes you want to cook up a pot of chili and settle in for a good winter and spring of reading!

—Stuart Rosebrook



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Black Hills Hero

When people think of Deadwood's early days, they usually concentrate on its raucous lifestyle, focusing on characters the likes of Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane. However, there were solid citizens, one of whom envisioned Deadwood becoming a mercantile center of the Black Hills. David Wolff tells that man's story in *The Savior of Deadwood: James K.P. Miller on the Gold Frontier* (South Dakota Historical Society Press, \$29.95). Miller, an early Deadwood grocer, became a prominent Deadwood promoter. Wolff uses Miller's life as a framework for Deadwood's history as it emerged from raucous gold camp to permanent community, rebuilding from a devastating fire, recovering from a ravaging flood, enduring economic downturns and railroad snubs. Miller worked to keep Deadwood alive and make it thrive.

—Bill Markley, author of *Wild Bill Hickok and Buffalo Bill Cody: Plainsmen of the Legendary West* (August 2022)

A True Westerner

Julia Bennett was a woman ahead of her time. So were her ancestors. During the Great Depression, Bennett arrived in New York City and enticed locals there to visit her dude ranch in Montana. Bennett was a known hunter with a reputation as a crack shot. Her ability to market a man's world in an era dominated by gender inequality is presented by author Lisa Hendrickson in *Burning the Breeze: Three Generations of Women in the American West* (Bison Books, \$21.95). Bennett's abilities may have come from her grandmother and mother who both set out from Missouri on a nearly year-long journey in a covered wagon northwest to their new home in Montana. *Burning the Breeze* tells the timely stories of these amazing women with the use of excerpts from diaries, letters and scrapbooks. The author also has carefully curated a collection of family photos to weave together three generations of heartbreak and success on the plains and high mountains of the West.

—Erik J. Wright, assistant editor of *The Tombstone Epitaph*

Card Sharks

Ralph Estes tapped into a pair of personal passions to turn out *Aces and Eights: Poker in the Old West* (TwoDot, \$18.95). "Without poker the West would have developed, of course," he writes, "but we

wouldn't have had so many of the characters that gave it such color, notoriety and even celebrity." Estes deals out those characters—gunfighting gamblers Wyatt Earp, Luke Short and Doc Holliday and saucy poker gals Lottie Deno, Dona Tules and

Madame Mustache—and the facts, exaggerations and legends that go with them. But he also pursues the development of today's poker craze by Texas-born criminal and casino owner Benny Binion and rambling professional poker players Doyle Brunson, Sailor Roberts and Amarillo Slim. Valuable appendixes complete this compelling story.

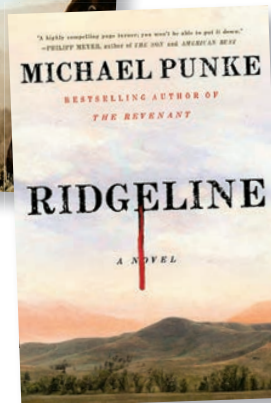
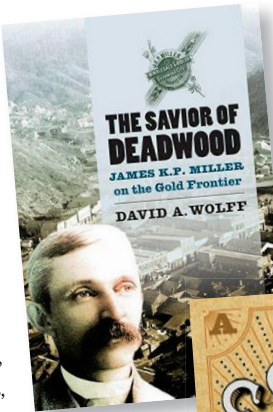
—Ollie Reed Jr., longtime New Mexico newspaperman and freelance writer

Fetterman Revisited

Michael Punke takes oft-told Western legends and makes them his own, as fresh as blood on the snow before it has time to freeze. In *Ridgeline: A Novel* (Henry Holt and Company, \$27.99), the bestselling author of *The Revenant* (turned into an Academy Award-winning film about mountain man Hugh Glass) takes readers down another familiar trail—the 1866 "Fetterman Massacre." Using third-person viewpoints, including those of scout Jim Bridger, Lakotas, enlisted men, civilians and William Fetterman and George Grummond, the officers usually blamed for the American Indian victory, Punke makes the story real, tragic, triumphant, brutal, heroic, iconic. His writing is tense, realistic,

savage, human—and difficult to separate fact from fiction.

—Johnny D. Boggs, author of *Return to Red River*





Courtesy Drew Desmond

PRESCOTT, ARIZONA HISTORIAN'S TOP PICKS

Drew Desmond was first charmed by Prescott while on a business trip in 1994 and moved there in 2002. He is secretary of the Prescott Western Heritage Foundation and is coauthor of the true crime book *Murder & Mayhem in Prescott*. In addition to writing for magazines and newspapers, his "#PrescottAZHistory" blog features over 250 articles and has welcomed over 650,000 readers. He suggests that after you read his book, you consider these titles:

- 1 **Hidden History of Prescott** by Parker Anderson (History Press): Eleven fascinating stories are that are rarely revealed, include a history of the Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe, Prescott's Chinatown, the Ku Klux Klan and even the area's history of UFOs.
- 2 **Junior Bonner: The Making of a Classic with Steve McQueen and Sam Peckinpah in the Summer of 1971** by Jeb Rosebrook with Stuart Rosebrook (BearManor Media): 2022 marks the 50th anniversary of this iconic rodeo movie. The book not only tells a fascinating behind-the-scenes story, but it brings one back to 1971 Prescott.
- 3 **The Whiskey Row Fire of 1900** by Bradley G. Courtney (History Press): This well-researched account of the greatest disaster in Prescott history is difficult to put down. The disaster had surprising effects, and the city's recovery was remarkable.
- 4 **Arizona's Gold Gangster Charles P. Stanton: Truth and Legend in Yavapai's Dark Days** by Parker Anderson (History Press): When the folklore of Stanton was placed into the crucible of fact-checking, nearly all of it burned away. In this lore-busting read, Anderson shows that Stanton was a highly nuanced character.
- 5 **True West Ultimate Historic Travel Guide 4th Edition** edited by Stuart Rosebrook (Two Roads West): Far more than a listing of historic places and museums, the highly illustrated guide is packed with photos and useful travel tips and suggested road trips across the West.

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By Henry C. Parke

Bruce Boxleitner

James Arness made all the difference in his storied film and television career.

In 1976, *Gunsmoke's* James Arness was about to take on the lead role in the series *How the West Was Won*. He had full cast approval. As he told the Television Academy Archives, "We watched four guys in scenes from other shows. Hands down, there was just one guy that [was] right for it." When the lights went up, ABC President Michael Eisner said he liked the second one. "I knew that it was live or die at that moment, so I just said, 'Well, I'm sorry, but I disagree with you. I want that third guy, Bruce Boxleitner.' Bruce turned out to be a great choice for it; he was just right."

Contemplating his career, Boxleitner says, "I attribute anything I did to Mr. James Arness. I probably would never have gotten to do anything, had he not made that one decision." Although he achieved stardom in the romantic spy series *The Scarecrow and Mrs. King*, and has a huge following for his sci-fi career, with the *Tron* films and the *Babylon 5* series, Boxleitner keeps coming back to Westerns.

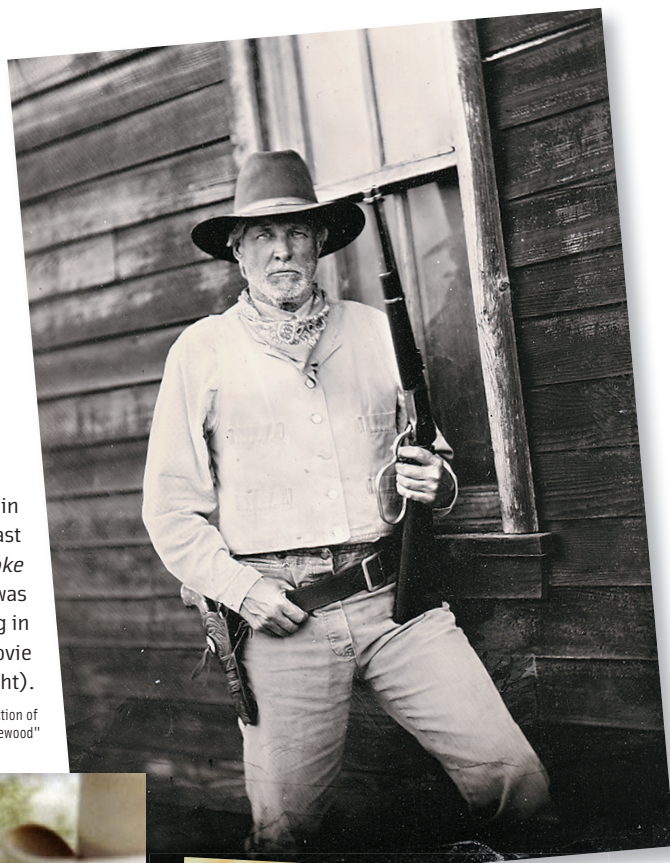
Born in Elgin, Illinois, Bruce spent summers at his grandparents' farm, where he played cowboy. "In high school, I wasn't the greatest student. I wanted to do something, and I walked in on an audition for the play, *Agatha Christie's 10 Little Indians*." He was hooked.

After graduating, he joined a repertory company in Chicago. His first Broadway play, "lasted a little more than a week." He reluctantly agreed to a tour of that play, "with the stipulation that I have a one-way ticket to Los Angeles. I came out here with a suitcase, twenty-two hundred bucks in cash and a pocket full of friends' phone numbers, and I slept on couches and living room floors."

It was perhaps prophetic that while his first paying work was on a sitcom, it was shot at the

Bruce Boxleitner's career acting in Westerns began when he was cast in an episode of CBS's *Gunsmoke* in 1975. In 2011, Boxleitner was still making Westerns, starring in the made-for-television movie *Smokewood* (right).

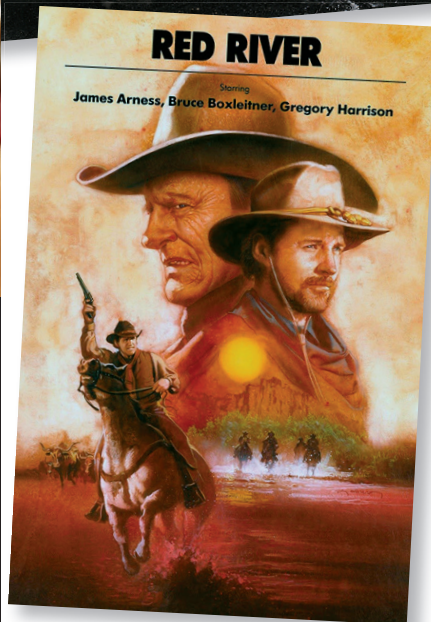
publicity photo taken in 2011 during production of 2012 TV movie "Smokewood"



Nearly 30 years after Bruce Boxleitner was first mentored by James Arness on the 1975 *Gunsmoke* episode "The Sharecroppers," Boxleitner was personally chosen by his mentor to costar with Arness on his final television film, *Guns smoke: One Man's Justice* (1994) (above).

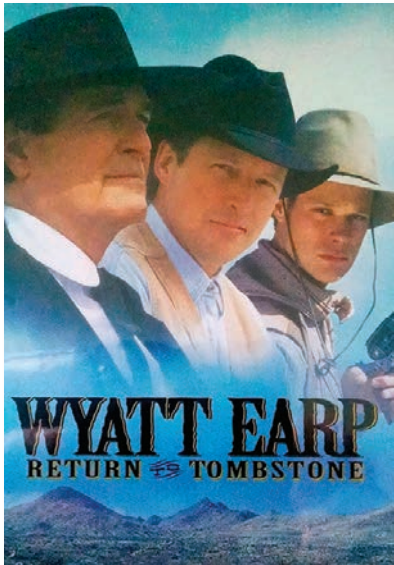
Courtesy CBS Television

lot that had once been Republic Studios. "My first job was four lines on the *Mary Tyler Moore Show*. At lunch I asked somebody where *Guns smoke* shot, and I went in to peek. Main Street, Dodge City, was built inside the soundstage! There's the Long Branch! I was pinching myself." He had reason to: CBS casting director Paula Palifoni then cast him in the final episode of *Guns smoke*. "And I was so broad in it. I looked at myself, I was mortified."



In the 1980s, few actors were as well-known in Western television movies and miniseries as Bruce Boxleitner, and in 1988 he was again cast opposite his mentor James Arness in the remake of the original 1948 *Red River* (above).

Courtesy CBS Television



While Bruce Boxleitner (center) did not appear with Hugh O'Brian (left) in *The Gambler Returns: The Luck of the Draw* (1991), Boxleitner was cast as Sam the sheriff, opposite the famous Western television star in *Wyatt Earp: Return to Tombstone* in 1994.

Courtesy CBS Television

A year later, in 1976, Boxleitner was starring opposite Arness in *How The West Was Won*, the series that established him. "He was my mentor, because I watched how a real television star worked, sick and well, in the day-to-day of a TV series. He led by example." The show was important to Boxleitner personally, as well as professionally. Without it, "I wouldn't have met my wife. I would not have had my sons," adding with a laugh, "and I married my sister," referring to Kathryn Holcomb, his first wife, who *played* his sister in the series.

After two decades as Matt Dillon, Arness loved playing Zeb McCahan, "because he got to cut loose with this rollicking big mountain man all in buckskin." Boxleitner remembers, "His World War II wounds were kicking in, his leg bowed out a bit. So he got to limp, like an old Indian Wars battle wound. He grew his hair long."

After four years, the series ended. Arness would play Jim Bowie in *The Alamo: Thirteen Days to Glory*, and play Matt Dillon again in *Return to Dodge*, the first of five *Gunsmoke* movies. Boxleitner was exceptionally busy, including playing the lawman in *I Married Wyatt Earp*, and most importantly, starring as Billy Montana, exuberant apprentice to Kenny Rogers in *The Gambler*. Boxleitner



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In 1976, a year after his first Western role on *Gunsmoke*, Bruce Boxleitner (near left) was cast as Luke Macahan, the son of James Arness (far left) in the ABC television series *How the West was Won*. They would appear in 26 episodes between 1976 and 1979.

Courtesy ABC Television

and Rogers became fast friends and would do four *Gambler* films together.

Then in 1988, the *Gambler* producers cast Boxleitner in the Montgomery Clift role for their remake of *Red River*. But who could play John Wayne's part? "They had Robert Mitchum and his son Chris," but the deal fell apart. "Then it was Kirk Douglas, [who] would have been a very short—but very intense—Thomas Dunson. James didn't want to do a role that was identified with John Wayne because of his respect for his friend and mentor. I told him, 'There's only one man left who could even go near John Wayne, James. You're the guy. You know that.' 'Well, damn them, send me the script.'"

In 1994, James Arness made his final film, the last *Gunsmoke* movie: *One Man's Justice*. CBS wanted a country singer, "Travis Tritt or Garth Brooks, to play this young outlaw that befriends Matt Dillon, and dies in his arms." Arness snarled at the executives, "I don't have the time to teach acting to some singer! Get me Boxleitner! I didn't learn any of this until after he died."



In his first decade as a Western film and television actor, Bruce Boxleitner had the fortune to be mentored by both *Gunsmoke*'s James Arness and *The Gambler*'s Kenny Rogers. Boxleitner costarred as Billy Montana in four of the five installments of *The Gambler* miniseries, including the third installment, *The Legend Continues* (1987).

Courtesy CBS Television

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Bruce Boxleitner's proven success as James Arness's costar in the television series *How the West was Won* (1976–79) and *Gunsmoke* (1975) led to his being cast opposite country music star Kenny Rogers in 1980 in *The Gambler*, the initial teleplay adaptation of the singer's hit song.

Courtesy CBS Television



Courtesy Lionsgate

BLU-RAY REVIEW

LAST SHOOT OUT (2021)

(Lionsgate \$14.99 Blu-Ray, \$12.99 DVD) A bride (Skylar Witte) flees on her wedding night upon learning her groom's brother and father have murdered her lawman dad. Travelers Billy (Brock Harris) and Red (Peter Sherayko) rescue her from the desert, taking her to a nearby stagecoach stop, where they, the stop-owners, and stagecoach passengers must face the onslaught of her outlaw in-laws. In this disarmingly traditional Western, director Michael Feiffer takes full advantage of the striking desert locations. The film is populated with a supporting cast that feels authentic, and can ride and shoot. The scenes with the fire-breathing father Bruce Dern with his weaselly, love-sick son Michael Welch are particularly enjoyable.



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

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Where History



Fort Concho Frontier Day, San Angelo, Texas
Courtesy San Angelo CVB



Happens

BY PETER CORBETT

Vigilant stewards keep the Old West alive in these Top Ten Towns.

Since the Manifest Destiny doctrine was expressed in the mid-19th century, Americans have searched the West for places that feed their souls and frame their world. It's ongoing.

As a chronicle of the West for 69 years, *True West* recognizes these Top Ten True Western Towns for succeeding in keeping the spirit of the Old West alive.

These towns from seven states have succeeded by sharing authentic stories of the trails, rails and cattle drives that put them on the map. They're also preserving their historic buildings, embracing Western artists, craftsmen and bootmakers, and keeping traditions alive—rodeos, frontier days and horse-drawn parades.

We doff our cowboy hats to these towns and encourage readers to visit the vibrant places. And don't miss the other 40 towns listed here where history is happening and cowboy culture thrives.

Eggemeyer's General Store,
San Angelo, Texas

Courtesy Library of Congress



San Angelo has deep roots with the founding of Fort Concho in 1867, and it has honored its history, preserving 23 of the garrison's buildings and keeping its Western traditions alive.

San Angelo will celebrate its 90th annual Stock Show and Rodeo this year with livestock events in February and the rodeo in April.

The Cowboy Gathering—Country & Western Swing Music Festival, in its 10th year, features more than a dozen bands in early September.

San Angelo's mayor owns Miss Hattie's Restaurant and Cathouse Lounge on historic Concho Street in a restored 1880s building. There's also Miss Hattie's Bordello Museum, named for a legendary madam who plied her trade here.

Overnight visitors might enjoy the Old Central Firehouse Bed & Brew. The 1929 firehouse features a pizzeria and taproom downstairs, plus a handful of second-floor rooms.

Other attractions: the Railway Museum in a restored 1909 depot, Museum of Fine Arts and the River Walk along the Concho River.

1. San Angelo, Texas

M.L. Leddy's of San Angelo has been making Western boots for a century. The family business has amassed stacks of bank ledger books with foot measurements for hundreds of thousands of customers who've bought Leddy's handmade boots.

The boot and Western wear company, celebrating its centennial this year, is among

San Angelo businesses and craftsmen who make saddles, boots, hats and spurs reflecting the town's Western heritage.

"We have a lot of other folks...who are the old-school makers of saddles to spurs and all those things," said Diann Bayes, San Angelo Convention and Visitors Bureau vice president. "Those are lost arts, but we continue to have that in our city."



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Saddle Bronc Riding, World's Oldest Rodeo, Prescott, Arizona

Courtesy Miller Photo

Visitors who count sheep might notice San Angelo has about 100 painted, ceramic sheep scattered around the city. The sculptures represent bygone days when San Angelo was the Mohair and Wool Capital of the World.

DiscoverSanAngelo.com

2. Prescott, Arizona

Prescott ranks high as a True Western Town for its historic rodeo, a deep embrace of its frontier history and the silver screen and real cowboys who have made their homes here.

Tom Mix, "King of the Cowboys" shot more than 100 Westerns at Granite Dells and other area locations during the silent movie era. Early Hollywood royalty, Mix lived for several years at his Bar Circle A Ranch, now a part of Prescott known as Yavapai Hills.

"Oklahoma claims [Tom Mix], but this was his workplace," said Prescott historian Drew Desmond. "He spent many years here, many summers here and won All-Around Cowboy



in 1913" at the World's Oldest Rodeo in Prescott.

The rodeo, held since 1888, and Frontier Days in July are Prescott's signature events.

Famous Prescott cowboy J.C. Trujillo is a local kid who got his start at the Prescott rodeo at age six and went on to win dozens of belt buckles and a World Championship in bareback riding in 1981. Trujillo, now 73, is in the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame.

Another silver screen cowboy who helped put Prescott on the True Western Town map was Steve McQueen, who starred in *Junior*

Bonner, a 1972 Sam Peckinpah movie filmed in town and at the rodeo. Prescott is gearing up to celebrate the 50th anniversary of *Junior Bonner* in conjunction with Frontier Days, according to Desmond, author of *Murder & Mayhem in Prescott*.

History is nearly a civic religion in Prescott with a legacy going back to its Territorial Capital days.

"It's so much a part of the Prescott tapestry. The citizenry just gets so involved with it," Desmond said.

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Pony Express National Museum,
St. Joseph, Missouri

Courtesy St. Joseph CVB

TOWNS

Where History is Happening Now

Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Oil turned Bartlesville into a boomtown. Woolaroc, an oil baron's 1925 lodge, is now a Western museum and wildlife preserve.

Boise, Idaho

Pioneer Village includes the Lewis and Clark Discovery Trail and Pavilion. Keep your kids in line with a visit to the 150-year-old Idaho Penitentiary.

Chama, New Mexico

Get Rocky Mountain high riding the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad from Chama to Antonito, Colorado, over 10,015-foot Cumbres Pass.

Ely, Nevada

Ely's Nevada Northern Railway Museum offers a steam-engine excursion and a Night Sky Star Train.

Fort Smith, Arkansas

Eighty-six men were hanged in Fort Smith from 1873-96. The National Historic Site has a reconstructed gallows.

Jerome, Arizona

Exhibits at Jerome State Historic Park, in a mining baron's 1916 mansion, explain the history of this "Billion Dollar Copper Camp."

Lincoln, New Mexico

See the courthouse on the "Most Dangerous Street in America" where Billy the Kid fatally shot two guards in 1878 and escaped a hanging.

Muskogee, Oklahoma

Muskogee named a street for the late Merle Haggard for his hit song "Okie From Muskogee" that put the town on the map in 1969.

Scottsbluff/Gering, Nebraska

Scotts Bluff National Monument and Chimney Rock National Historic Site offer insights into the history of these towns and Oregon Trail landmarks.

St. Joseph, Missouri

Pony Express National Museum tells of the short-lived express mail service, including the story of Charlie Miller, the youngest rider at age 11.

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photo by Horse Photo Media

Cavalry Barracks, Fort Caspar Museum,
Casper, Wyoming

Courtesy Fort Caspar Museum

The town's most important havens of history include: Sharlot Hall Museum, Western Heritage Center and the Museum of Indigenous People.

Prescott has long been known for Whiskey Row—a stretch of saloons on Montezuma Street that includes Matt's, Jersey Lilly, Bird Cage and the Palace, one of Arizona's oldest bars, open since 1877.

Visit-Prescott.com

3. Casper, Wyoming

Before Casper was incorporated as a town in 1889, hundreds of thousands of emigrants passed through central Wyoming on the Oregon, California and Mormon trails.

Modern Casper pays homage to that history with the 20-year-old National Historic Trails Interpretive Center. Visitors can learn about those trails and the emigrants who traveled 2,000 miles by wagon to reach their destinations in the mid-19th century.

Historic Trails West, run by private outfitter Morris Carter, takes visitors on those trails in re-created covered wagons on trips ranging in length



from two hours to five days. The longer trek reaches scenic South Pass where the trails split. It's quite an experience for modern travelers, Carter said.

"They can see these great, big, wide open vistas and travel back in time in their mind. And they visualize an entire long line of wagons and people walking beside them."

The museum at re-created Fort Caspar focuses on the area's military history. The fort, which includes a replica Mormon ferry boat, was named

for Lt. Caspar Collins, who was killed by Indians in 1865. He is the town's namesake, but the spelling of his name was mistakenly altered.

Today, Casper is known for the College National Finals Rodeo, which attracts big crowds in June.

Casper is also home to Lou Taubert Ranch Outfitters, a 55,000-square-foot store in an historic downtown building with a three-story neon sign. It opened in 1917 in Fort Laramie and moved to Casper 30 years later.

VisitCasper.com

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4. Tombstone, Arizona

Tombstone's devotion to preserving its history and a succession of Hollywood movies keep attracting visitors to dusty Allen Street.

It's been just over 140 years since the shoot-out at the O.K. Corral, and people from all over the globe show up here to walk in the footsteps of the lawmen and outlaws who clashed in deadly gunfights.

"Cochise County was the last part of the United States to have law and order, and that's reflected in our town's history with the gunfight, which still leads to most of our tourism," said Jonathon Donahue, Tombstone marketing director.

"We're a real town... If you come here, you don't have to pay admission. You're in an Old West town. We have no fast food. We have no stoplights."

Tombstone does have its historic 1880s saloons on Allen Street—the Crystal Palace and the Oriental, where Wyatt Earp had a piece of the gambling action.

Other popular watering holes are Big Nose Kate's and Tombstone Brewing Co., which serves Helles Dorado Lager.



O.K. Corral, Tombstone, Arizona

Courtesy TCSHP

It's a fitting beer for Helldorado Days, one of Tombstone's major events, set for October 21-22 this year. Another top event is Wyatt Earp Days on May 28-29.

Day trips are popular for Arizona visitors, but Tombstone encourages overnights stays in its hotels and B&Bs.

"If visitors come here for more than a day and walk around at six in the evening on the boardwalk, with the sun going down, it's like going back in time to the 1880s," Donahue said.

DiscoverTombstone.com

5. Durango, Colorado

In July 1882, the tracks of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad were completed from Durango to Silverton in southwestern Colorado's San Juan Mountains. Today, 140 years later, that rail line still carries passengers on the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad.

The steam-powered train, which appeared in the 1969 Western classic *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, is Durango's most sublime Western experience. The sound of the steam locomotive's whistle is a charming throwback to the town's 19th-century beginnings.

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The historic ambience is kept alive in Durango's historic district by three vintage hostleries: the 130-year-old Rochester Hotel, the 1898 General Palmer Hotel, built by Civil War Gen. William Jackson Palmer of the Union Army, and the 135-year-old Strater Hotel with its Diamond Belle Saloon and guest room number 222 where Louis L'Amour wrote Westerns.

Durango is also known as a base camp for outdoor adventures, skiing and snowboarding, whitewater paddling and mountain biking, according to Rachel Welsh, communications manager at Visit Durango.

"It's the very quintessential mountain town but without the ego," she said. "It has the history. It has great food. You have the river.

You have the mountains. You can never get bored here."

Annual events include a winter festival known as Snowdown in late January, the Bluegrass Meltdown in April and a Cowboy Poetry Gathering in late September.

Durango.org

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Trinidad History Museum,
Trinidad, Colorado

Courtesy Colorado Tourism

TOWNS

Where History Lives

Belle Fourche, South Dakota

This town near the Wyoming border is home to the Center of the Nation monument, which is 20 miles from the actual center of the 50 states.

Bisbee, Arizona

There are options in this mining town, but it's hard to go wrong at Cafe Roka, Letson Lofts, Old Bisbee Brewing Co. and St. Elmo in Brewery Gulch.

Carbon County, Wyoming

(Saratoga/Encampment)

Fish the North Platte River, soak at the Saratoga Hot Springs Resort or the free Hobo Pool and bunk in the historic Wolf Hotel.

Cody, Wyoming

Kanye West is selling his ranch here, but there's still plenty of True West attractions in Cody, most notably the Buffalo Bill Center of the West.

Converse County, Wyoming

(Douglas/Glenrock)

There's railroad and ranching history here, and Glenrock's Paleon Museum has a triceratops discovered nearby in 1994.

Dubois, Wyoming

The National Bighorn Sheep Center welcomes visitors to learn about its conservation work. Welty's General Store opened in 1889 in a log cabin.

Dubuque, Iowa

One of Iowa's oldest settlements is a riverboat port and home to the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium.

Fort Worth, Texas

The National Cowgirl Museum honors women of the West, including Annie Oakley, Georgia O'Keeffe and Sandra Day O'Connor, a Supreme Court Justice raised on an Arizona ranch.

Gothenburg, Nebraska

Swedes and Germans built a tidy town here on the Platte River. Visit the Sod House Museum and two Pony Express stations.

Great Falls, Montana

Great Falls is home to the C.M. Russell Museum, Lewis and Clark National Trail Interpretive Center and a 57-mile River's Edge Trail on the Missouri.

Heber Valley, Utah

Heber Valley Historic Railroad has scenic views of the Wasatch Mountains. Try the 24-mile Alpine Loop for a scenic drive through American Fork Canyon.

Leavenworth, Kansas

Kansas's oldest city, established in 1854, is home to the Frontier Army, Fred Harvey and C.W. Parker Carousel museums.

Medora, North Dakota

View bison in Theodore Roosevelt National Park and see the *Medora Musical*, a tribute to the 26th president, patriotism and the West.

Rapid City, South Dakota

This is a good base camp for visiting Mount Rushmore, 30 miles away. There's also an in-progress mountain carving at the Crazy Horse Memorial.

Sidney, Nebraska

Fort Sidney in western Nebraska was a supply depot that aided Black Hills gold prospectors starting in 1870.

The Dalles, Oregon

Exhibits at the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center explain the volcanic upheaval and floods that forged the gorge.

Tonopah, Nevada

The Historic Mining Park includes four major mining operations. Overnight lodging is available at the 1907 Mizpah Hotel and Old Brewery Hostel.

Trinidad, Colorado

Trinidad History Museum with exhibits on the Santa Fe Trail is housed in the 1882 Victorian home of cattle baron Frank Bloom.

Wallace, Idaho

The Northern Pacific Depot Museum shares stories of the Coeur d'Alene Mining District. Find the town's Center of the Universe marker.

Yakima, Washington

In addition to wineries and breweries, the town is home to the Yakima Valley Museum, with an historic home exhibit and pioneer cabin.

6. Deadwood, South Dakota

Gold strikes in the mid-1870s in the Black Hills led to the founding of Deadwood, and by the end of 1876 more than 3,000 prospectors and other fortune-seekers crowded into the fledgling town.

Modern Deadwood, a National Historic District, celebrates its boomtown roots with the Days of '76 celebration in late July. It includes a parade of horse-drawn carriages, Native American dance performances and what is touted as the "Best Rodeo. No Bull."

This year's celebration is extra special since it is the 100th anniversary of the Days of '76.

In July 1922, the *Daily Deadwood Pioneer-Times* reported on plans for the event:

"The finishing touches are being added to the Legion building where The Days of '76 will be staged each night of the Round-Up. Here you will find the scenes of those thrilling days enacted in a manner that will make you think the pages of time have turned back nearly a half century. There will be barrels and barrels of fun and other things on tap each night."

Deadwood also will celebrate Wild Bill Days June 16-18 with music and gold panning lessons.

Legendary gunfighter Wild Bill Hickok was shot to death in a Deadwood saloon August 2, 1876 and is buried in the town cemetery next to Calamity Jane.

Deadwood.com



Days of '76 Parade,
Deadwood, South Dakota

Courtesy South Dakota Office of Tourism

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Cheyenne Frontier Days, Cheyenne, Wyoming

Courtesy Library of Congress

7. Cheyenne, Wyoming

Visitors to Cheyenne should not be surprised if they find themselves looking at locomotives and soaking up railroad history in a spectacular 1886 depot.

“Cheyenne is first and foremost a railroad town,” explained Jim Walter, Visit Cheyenne’s vice president. “That’s why we’re here. It was the best place to get across the Rockies.”

The Union Pacific Railroad built the Cheyenne depot and it’s described as the last of the grand railroad stations on the transcontinental route.

The depot museum features a model train exhibit and details on massive steam and diesel-electric locomotives.

Because of steep grades to the west, Cheyenne was home to the largest steam-powered locomotives. One of the so-called Big Boys is on display in nearby Holliday Park.

Another big draw is Cheyenne Frontier Days, billed as the World’s Largest Outdoor Rodeo and Western Celebration. Held since 1897, it attracts close to 250,000 spectators over 10 days, Walter said.

Visitors also might enjoy the Nelson Museum of the West, with exhibits on lawmen, outlaws and the wealthy cattle barons who made Cheyenne the “Paris of the West.”

A train at Terry Bison Ranch takes passengers for a tour of the ranch and for up-close but safe encounters with bison.

“We take a lot of pride here in maintaining an authentic Western experience for people,” Walter said.

Cheyenne.org

8. Dodge City, Kansas

In its early days on the Kansas frontier Dodge City was known as the “Wickedest Little City in America.”

For good reason.

“The reputation of the city has not been first-class for peace and quietness,” reported the *Leavenworth Daily Commercial* in February 1873.

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1 - 8 0 0 - O L D - W E S T



Boot Hill Museum,
Dodge City,
Kansas
Courtesy Kansas Tourism

“As is natural with all new Western towns, it has been made a headquarters for the all the roughs of the land, who congregated there for the purpose of carrying on their nefarious business of murder and rapine [plunder]. Seventeen of these [outlaws] repose quietly beneath the sod on the banks of the Arkansas [River].”

Modern Dodge City has traded on that nefarious reputation to bring visitors to this Wild West town and to enjoy newer amenities that pay homage to its frontier legacy. The town will celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2022. That includes Dodge City Days, a 10-day celebration that features a parade, concerts, Western art shows, a longhorn cattle drive and a PRCA Rodeo.

A new event—Founders Weekend—has been added to the calendar to honor George Hoover, who in 1872 set up the first business in what would become Dodge City. It was a saloon, initially operated out of a sod hut.



The Long Branch Saloon, which operated from 1874-85, was Dodge City’s most famous watering hole. It served booze to Western legends Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday and Bat Masterson.

The saloon gained fame as a focal point of *Gunsmoke*, a TV Western set in Dodge City.

A re-creation of the Long Branch is one of many features at Dodge City’s Boot Hill Museum. Other Dodge City attractions include the Santa Fe Depot, Mueller-Schmidt House and Boot Hill Distillery.

VisitDodgeCity.org

9. Bandera, Texas

Skeptics of Bandera’s bold claim of being “The Cowboy Capital of the World” should visit the town plaza.

That’s where a Texas Historical Commission marker, signed by two congressmen and the governor, says it is so.

The Texas Hill Country town founded by entrepreneurs on the Medina River 170 years ago has the bona fides to back the claim, according to Patricia Moore, Bandera County tourism bureau executive director.

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Virginia City, Montana

Courtesy Montana Tourism



Mardi Gras, Bandera, Texas

Courtesy Library of Congress

Bandera earned its spurs as a staging area for cowboys and cattle drives on the Western Trail with more than seven million longhorns passing through between 1874-94.

Nearly four decades later, Bandera became a hub for dude ranches.

Rodeos have gained in popularity during the past century with at least 18 events planned at Bandera's Mansfield Park this year.

"We're authentic," Moore said. "We're not a movie town. We are a town that loves everything about living in the West."

The Dixie Dude Ranch, the area's oldest, is celebrating its 85th anniversary.

A focal point for Bandera is the O.S.T. Restaurant, shorthand for the Old Spanish Trail. It celebrated its centennial in 2021.

Bandera is known for its music scene. The now-closed Cabaret Dance Hall was country swinging for close to 80 years, with acts ranging from Bob Wills to Robert Earl Keen and Steve Earle.

Arkey Blue's Silver Dollar is a lively Texas honky-tonk and the 11th Street Cowboy Bar is hosting its Cowboy Mardi Gras on February 17-19.

Bandera's Frontier Times Museum has a collection of pioneer relics and a Texas Heroes Hall of Fame that includes writer and folklorist J. Frank Dobie, singer-humorist Kinky

Friedman and Gary P. Nunn, known for his song "London Homesick Blues."

BanderaCowboyCapital.com

10. Virginia City/ Nevada City, Montana

Yellowstone National Park is only 90 minutes from Virginia City and Nevada City, Montana, but it's a time-travel journey back to the 1860s when a placer gold strike spawned these frontier towns.

Visitors discover adjacent mining camps with hundreds of buildings and homes that have maintained their historic character, thanks to local and state preservation efforts. Those who take the back roads to get here are rewarded, said David Bacon, Virginia City councilman and volunteer fireman.

"I think once they get here they realize how important the history is," he said. "This is literally the birthplace of Montana. The first legislature ever in Montana met in a building down on Main Street, which is still there."

Virginia City, the first state capital from 1865-75, has the oldest operating retail store, Rank's Mercantile, that's still running after 158 years. It has Montana's oldest saloon, the Bale of Hay, established in 1867.

"When people start wandering around they realize this is the real stuff."

In May 1863, prospectors discovered placer gold in Alder Creek in southwestern Montana. Virginia City, Nevada City and other mining camps were quickly established along a 14-mile stretch of the creek.

The population boomed to more than 8,000 and attracted some unsavory characters. But vigilantes rounded up five highway men in January 1864 and hanged them at a building that's still standing. The bandits are buried in Virginia City's Boot Hill Cemetery.

VirginiaCityMT.com



Peter Corbett moved West to Flagstaff, Arizona, in 1974 and earned a degree at Northern Arizona University in English, with an American Studies minor. He's been exploring the West ever since.

TOWNS

to Experience Cowboy Culture



J.M. Capriola Co., Elko, Nevada

Courtesy TravelNevada

Abilene, Kansas

Catch up on Abilene's frontier era at the Dickinson County Heritage Center. Don't miss Chisholm Trail Days every Labor Day Weekend.

Amarillo, Texas

Big Texan Steak Ranch and Cadillac Ranch get all the ink and spray paint but escape to Palo Duro Canyon for Western scenery, historic sites and horseback riding.

Bishop, California

Learn about Owens Valley history at the Paiute Shoshone Cultural Center and Laws Railroad Museum.

Buffalo, Wyoming

Writer Craig Johnson sparked interest in Buffalo with his Sheriff Longmire book series set here. Buffalo hosts Longmire Days in September.

Elko, Nevada

A Western Folklife Center exhibit features the art of Jo Mora, who traveled the California Mission Trail on horseback.

Laramie, Wyoming

Laramie's Jubilee Days mark Wyoming Statehood Day and include a PRCA Rodeo.

Miles City, Montana

Miles City was established after the Battle of Little Bighorn. Learn about the town's namesake at the Range Riders Museum.

Pendleton, Oregon

It's known for its rodeo in September and hosts an annual Cattle Barons Weekend in the spring.

Sheridan, Wyoming

Brinton Museum features the 19th-century photos of Timothy O'Sullivan and William Henry Jackson.

Wickenburg, Arizona

Travelers can find vestiges of the Old West in Wickenburg with dude ranches, team roping and a tour of the Vulture City ghost town.



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Courtesy Wickenburg Chamber of Commerce

ANTIQUÉ SHOW

VINTAGE TULSA SHOW

Tulsa, OK, February 18-20: Shop a wide selection of antiques from some of the region's most prominent and professional collectors. 918-619-2875 • HeritageEventCompany.com

ART SHOWS

WINGS OVER THE PLATTE RIVER

Grand Island, NE, February 11-April 3: See the region's largest art exhibit dedicated to life on the Platte River. 308-385-5316 • StuhrMuseum.org

WIGWAM FESTIVAL OF FINE ART

Litchfield Park, AZ, February 18-20: The annual festival features Western, Southwestern and American Indian fine art. 623-935-9040 • Litchfield-Park.org

WESTERN SPIRIT ART SHOW AND SALE

Cheyenne, WY, March 5-April 16: This juried art show showcases professional artists from around the United States. 307-778-7290 • OldWestMuseum.org

COWGIRL UP! EXHIBITION & SALE OPENING WEEKEND

Wickenburg, AZ, March 25-27: An opening gala at the Desert Caballeros Western Museum kicks off the invitational exhibition of Western art by women. 928-684-2272 • WesternMuseum.org

COWBOY ACTION SHOOTING

END OF TRAIL

Phoenix, AZ, February 28-March 6: The World Championship of Cowboy Action Shooting, End of Trail, moves to its new home in 2022—the Ben Avery Shooting Facility in Phoenix, Arizona. The Arizona Territorial Company of Rough Riders will host the SASS World Championship. 602-397-3434 • EndOfTrail.org

HERITAGE FESTIVALS

ARIZONA RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL & ARTISAN MARKETPLACE

Gold Canyon, AZ, February 5-April 3: Old West time travelers take in Medieval arts & crafts, jousting tournaments and an outdoor circus. 520-463-2600 • RenFestInfo.com

BATTLE OF THE ALAMO COMMEMORATION

San Antonio, TX, February 23-March 6: The Texas Army and the San Antonio Living History Association portray events leading to the Battle of the Alamo. 210-225-1391 • TheAlamo.org

BUFFALO SOLDIER HERITAGE DAY

San Angelo, TX, February 27: Join the Fort Concho Buffalo Soldier Living History Unit as they honor the nation's black troops. 325-657-4440 • FortConcho.com

BUFFALO BILL BIRTHDAY BASH

Golden, CO, March 1: Observe the Wild West showman's birthday with tours by costumed guides and birthday cake at the Buffalo Bill Museum & Grave exhibits. 303-526-0744 • BuffaloBill.org



73RD GOLD RUSH DAYS AND SENIOR PRO RODEO
Wickenburg, AZ, February 11-13: Wickenburg's mining and ranching origins are celebrated with a pro rodeo, parade, carnival and concerts. 800-942-5242 • WickenburgChamber.com

GOLIAD MASSACRE RE-ENACTMENT

Goliad, TX, March 26-27: The occupation of Fort Defiance and the 1836 Goliad Massacre are re-created, with a memorial service on the last day. 361-635-3752 • PresidioLaBahia.org

CRANE WATCH FESTIVAL

Kearney, NE, March 20-26: More than 500,000 Sandhill cranes migrate to the Platte River Valley during their northward migration. 800-652-9435 • VisitKearney.org

MUSIC

JAM SESSIONS AT THE OCCIDENTAL HOTEL

Buffalo, WY, Thursdays in February & March: Local musicians gather to perform the best bluegrass, Western and folk music. 307-684-0451 • OccidentalWyoming.com

POETRY GATHERINGS

LONE STAR COWBOY POETRY GATHERING

Alpine, TX, February 18-19: Don Cadden, Dave Stamey, Jill Jones and the Jingle Bobs and others celebrate the oral and musical traditions of the American West. 432-216-2167 • LoneStarCowboyPoetry.com

PARADES

ARIZONA PARADA DEL SOL HISTORIC PARADE & HASHKNIFE PONY EXPRESS

Scottsdale, AZ, February 5-6: Don't miss the arrival of the Hashknife Pony Express re-enactors on Friday and the historic parade through the heart of Old Scottsdale on Saturday. 480-990-3179 • ScottsdaleParade.com

STOCK SHOWS & RODEOS

FORT WORTH STOCK SHOW & RODEO

Fort Worth, TX, January 14-February 5: Numerous days of livestock and horse shows, rodeos, concerts and food are scheduled. 817-877-2420 • FWSSR.com

SAN ANTONIO STOCK SHOW & RODEO

San Antonio, TX, February 10-27: The event features PRCA and ranch rodeo competitions, livestock shows and Country music concerts. 210-225-5851 • SARodeo.com

SCOTTSDALE ARABIAN HORSE SHOW

Scottsdale, AZ, February 17-27: About 2,000 horses compete for more than \$1 million at this internationally famous horse show that also features equine seminars, vendors and fun for all. 480-515-1500 • ScottsdaleShow.com

WINNEMUCCA RANCH HAND RODEO

Winnemucca, NV, March 2-6: This annual event features ranch hands competing in rodeo events, plus cow dog trials, horse and bull sales, and a trade show. 775-623-2220 • RanchRodeoNV.com

PBR GLOBAL CUP USA

Arlington, TX, March 5: The top 10 rodeo athletes in the world compete in seven events at the world's richest one-day rodeo. 817-892-4000 • ATTStadium.com

CINCH TIMED EVENT CHAMPIONSHIP

Guthrie, OK, March 10-12: The best all-around timed-event hands in professional rodeo compete at the Lazy E Arena in five rodeo timed events. 800-595-7433 • LazyETec.com

TRADE SHOWS

TUCSON FESTIVAL OF BOOKS

Tucson, AZ, March 12-13: Join authors from many different genres who come together at this major annual U.S. book festival at the University of Arizona for Old West panel discussions, book signings and visiting hundreds of book vendors. 520-621-0302 • TucsonFestivalOfBooks.org

WINTER FESTIVALS

CRIPPLE CREEK ICE FESTIVAL

Cripple Creek, CO, February 5-13: Watch sculptors carve ice into works of art, plus enjoy a liquor luge, ice snacks, an ice slide and ice maze. 877-858-4653 • VisitCrippleCreek.com

TWMag.com:

View Western events on our website.



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. Please always include your name, city and state.

Saloons, Paniolos and Telegraphs



Was the Long Branch Saloon in Dodge City, Kansas, an integrated saloon during 1876 to 1886, the height of the cattle drive era? This rare interior photo of Chalk Beeson's famous Front Street bar shows bartender Lo Warren (front right), a Black bartender and cowboys sitting at the rear of the saloon.

True West Archives

Was there racial separation in the Old West? Could a Black cowboy go into a Tombstone saloon?

Jeffery S. King
Washington, DC

It's difficult, if not impossible, to provide a simple answer. The West is the largest region in the United States, and the period known as the Old West spanned just a few decades, but many parts of the West were settled by Southerners, so segregation prevailed in those areas.

Being a cowboy was one of the few jobs open to men of color. Black and white cowboys mixed and mingled with each other. Working for an outfit meant "riding for the brand." If cowboys working for the same outfit came into a saloon, it's likely they drank together, and if anybody didn't like it, there was a good chance a brawl occurred. Black and white, those who rode for the brand stuck together in the ruckus.

Several other accounts reported violence when Blacks tried to get served in "white" bars and vice versa.

Pity the poor Chinese. Most of the animosity and prejudice in the West was directed at them. This eased some of the discrimination against Blacks.

How did Indians communicate with whites?

Bob Powers
Cincinnati, Ohio

They might use sign language, or they might use an interpreter—often based on a common, non-Indian language. In the north country, French was the common language. In Apache and Navajo country, they spoke Spanish, the universal language of the

Southwest. In some cases, the whites had lived among the Indians and had learned their language. There was no "one size fits all" when it came to communication.

Can you tell me about Hawaiian cowboys?

George Abril
Indio, California

In the 1823, the king of Hawaii, King Kamehameha III, imported some vaqueros from Spanish California to teach the Hawaiians how to gather, ride, rope and herd the wild cattle on the island. They were called *Españoles* (Spaniards), which the native Hawaiians pronounced *paniolos*. In time all cowboys in Hawaii became known as *paniolos*. Two good sources on them are *Rough Riders: Hawaii's Paniolo and Their Stories* by Llima Loomis and *Aloha Rodeo: Three Hawaiian Cowboys, the World's Greatest Rodeo, and a Hidden History of the American West* by David Wolman.



In the 1850s, Californio Spanish-Mexican vaqueros were invited to work the big cattle ranches in Hawaii like the Parker Ranch (above) on the Big Island. Because they were *Españoles* and spoke *Español* (Spanish) they were nicknamed "paniolos."

Courtesy Hawaii State Archives/NPS.gov



Telegraph messenger boys like this young man from Fort Worth, Texas, worked long hours running and bicycling to deliver incoming and outgoing telegraph messages.

Courtesy Library of Congress

How did the telegraph system work in the Old West?

Jim Zeirke
Sussex, Wisconsin

Like a post office letter, in addition to your message, you specified who the message was from, who it was intended for, and where they were located. Your telegraph station would send it to the next nearest station, which forwarded it on until it got to the destination telegraph station. A messenger would get on his bicycle and deliver the telegram. If that was not possible, the destination station would hold it until the receiver picked it up.

How did Bob Ford, the killer of Jesse James, die?

Joe Manriquez
Whittier, California

On June 8, 1892, Ed O'Kelley entered Ford's tent saloon in Creede, Colorado, carrying a shotgun. Witnesses said Ford's back was turned. "Hello, Bob," O'Kelley said. As Ford turned around, O'Kelley cut loose with both barrels. Ford died instantly. Thus, Ed O'Kelley became the "man who killed the man who killed Jesse James." He never explained his reason for gunning down Bob Ford.

After 7,000 people signed a petition in favor of his release, O'Kelley's sentence was commuted, and he was freed on October 3, 1902. He was shot and killed two years later when he attacked an Oklahoma City lawman.



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Churchill County Museum <i>CCMuseum.org</i>	p. 71	Shady Lady's Closet <i>ShadyLadysCloset.com</i>	p. 68
Cowgirl Up! Show & Sale at Desert Caballeros Western <i>WesternMuseum.org</i>	p. 60	Sheridan, WY <i>SheridanWyoming.org</i>	p. 13
Dodge City, KS <i>VisitDodgeCity.org</i>	p. 72	Sherry Blanchard Stuart <i>SherryBlanchardStuart.com</i>	p. 57
Dubois, WY <i>DuboisWyoming.org</i>	p. 75	Sidney, NE <i>VisitSidneyNE.com</i>	p. 53
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What HISTORY HAS TAUGHT ME

My parents were big band era musicians (Ray Herbeck & His Music With Romance) and instilled in me a love of music, history and reading. I traveled with the band. I remember visiting Lincoln's grave, Dodge City's boot hill and Pea Ridge battlefield. It fired my imagination.

Growing up "on the road," I learned to amuse myself in hotel rooms with the radio, books and dabbling at writing.

I was raised through seventh grade in North Hollywood, California, near the studios and through high school in Seal Beach, California, trying miserably to surf. It taught me humility.

My first Western hero was Hopalong Cassidy. By age six I wore a black "Hoppy" outfit, boots, hat and toy pistol rig.

My mentor first and foremost would be my dad, who said to find what I loved doing most and then find a way to make a living at it—and be your own boss, as he had been.

An author I revere is historical novelist John Jakes, with whom I spent time on *North & South I* and *II*, based on his books. I was historian and technical advisor but also an aspiring writer. I followed his advice to be accurate in portraying the history into which I set my characters. Otherwise, you are dishonest to your characters and your audience.

History is a cruel mistress. At times, it would be so much easier to alter facts to better fit my storyline!

Marriage to the right woman has meant everything to me, literally saving my life from starving in a rock cover band (although we did "open" for Van Halen at a Hollywood club!). Ruth has been my cherished partner for 45 years. She keeps me focused on writing as my true calling with music as a beloved avocation. And she is a terrific period seamstress, dressing me well for living history events.

My favorite Western is *The Longriders*. This Jesse James saga combines history, legend, great acting and soaring period music by Ry Cooder—tough to top. Its score inspired me to abandon rock for Americana tunes, eventually becoming one of The Slackjaw Brothers.

If I could meet Colonel Robert Shaw, I would smoke a cigar with him, as he so loved to do. I recall telling this to Matthew Broderick, who portrayed Shaw in *Glory*. We carried boxes of Marsh Wheeling cigars for him on the prop truck.

Glory was my most important film because it told the previously ignored Civil War contribution of Black troops. As associate producer, I was tasked by producer Freddie Fields to make it historically right. And our director, Ed Zwick, allowed me the leeway to do so. Screenwriter Kevin Jarre had written an accurate, dramatic script that Fields had bought 10 years earlier. Jarre was so excited to at last see it made that he took a "Hitchcock moment" and portrayed an antagonistic white soldier who toward the end shouts, "Give 'em hell, 54th!"



Photo by Ruth Clinknick

NOVELIST, MUSICIAN, FILMMAKER

Ray Herbeck, Jr. is a historical novelist, Americana musician (*SlackJawBros.com*) and former film/TV writer/ producer. His Mexican War book, *Changing Flags, A Novel of the Battalion of St. Patrick*, (Five Star Publishing) will debut January 19 (*Amazon.com* and *BarnesAndNoble.com*) and sports a dust cover endorsement by eminent historian/author Robert Utley. Among his many film credits (*IMDB.com*) is associate producer of *Glory*, during which he worked with the late screenwriter Kevin Jarre (*Tombstone*).

Davy Crockett with Fess Parker inspired me to "re-enact" historical characters and read "serious" history books at age nine. I wore a coonskin cap...and now on my bar I have an autographed bottle of Fess Parker wine that sports a tiny coonskin cap.

Producing a documentary is demanding as to facts and photographs but ultimately rewarding...if you get it right.

Being a technical advisor as I began my career could be frustrating when no one listens to you. I learned to "whisper" suggestions rather than embarrass anyone. Then I got things done.

A movie I always wished I could have worked on was John Wayne's *The Alamo*. It was terrific spectacle but poor history...maybe I could have helped!

What history has taught me is that it remains a stranger to far too many good citizens of this country.



Discover Where History Happened in the Old West

True West magazine has inspired travelers to take the road less traveled and explore the historic sites and towns of the American West. The Third Edition of the *True West* Ultimate Historic Travel Guide has been carefully updated with recommendations on the essential museums of the Old West. Anyone who wants to discover a region from the ground up—and immerse in its local history—will be inspired to visit a Western museum and experience the dynamic, enthralling history of the American West.

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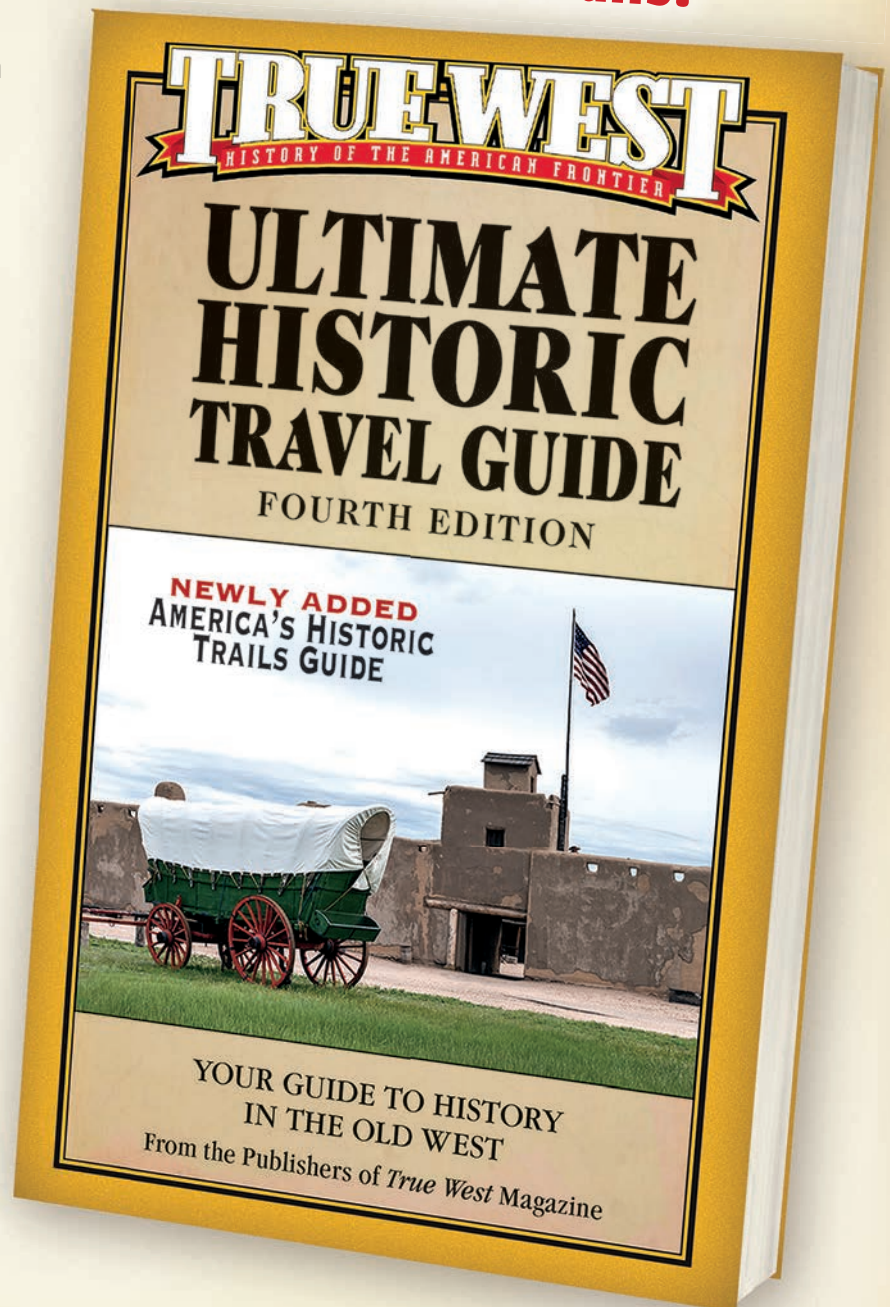
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