

FROM TOMBSTONE TO TEXAS: OUR ANNUAL WESTERN ART ISSUE

TRUE WEST

HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN FRONTIER



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**What Really Happened
to El Chivato?**

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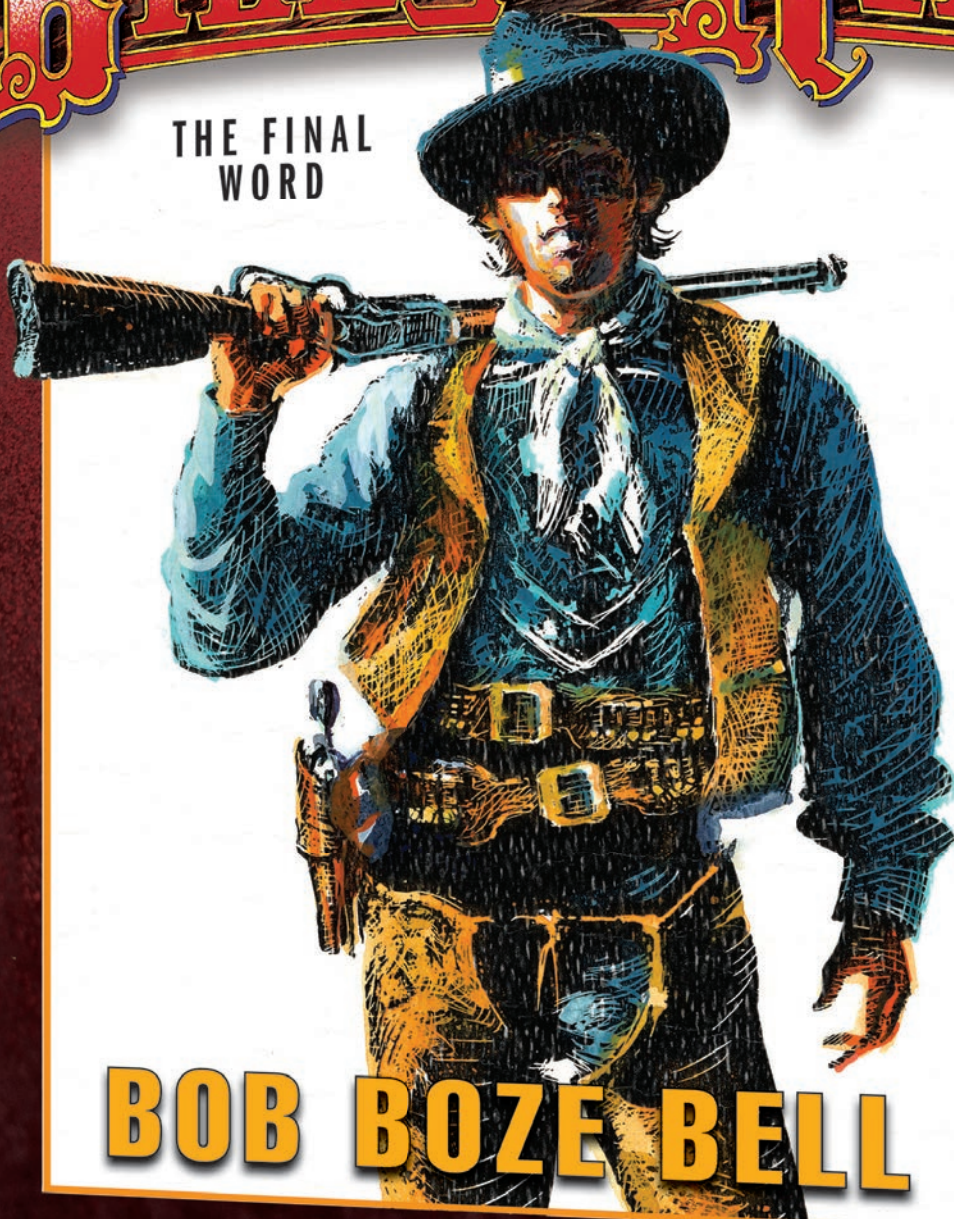
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After World War II, Cowboy Artists of America co-founder George Phippen developed into one of the most sought-after Western painters and illustrators. His 1954 28"-by-40" oil *River Ford* displays his knowledge of the day-to-day life of the working cowboy. For more on George Phippen and his ongoing influence on today's generation of cowboy artists, read Jana Bommerbach's "Old West Saviors" column on page 14.

Courtesy the Phippen Museum Permanent Collection, Prescott, AZ







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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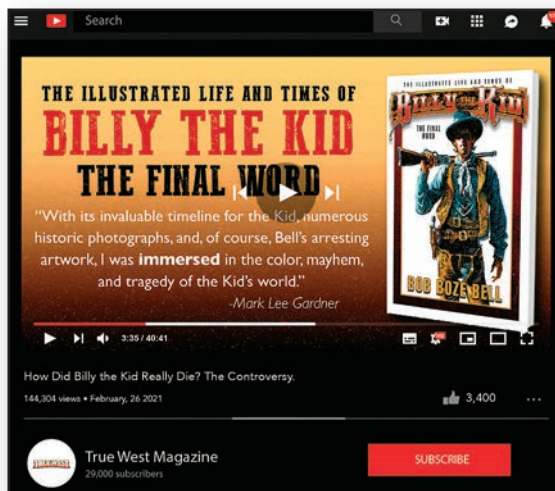
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The real story behind Pat Garrett's infamous gun that killed Billy the Kid.

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In the wake of flood waters, the people and places around Yellowstone eagerly await visitors to their beloved region.

—By Candy Moulton

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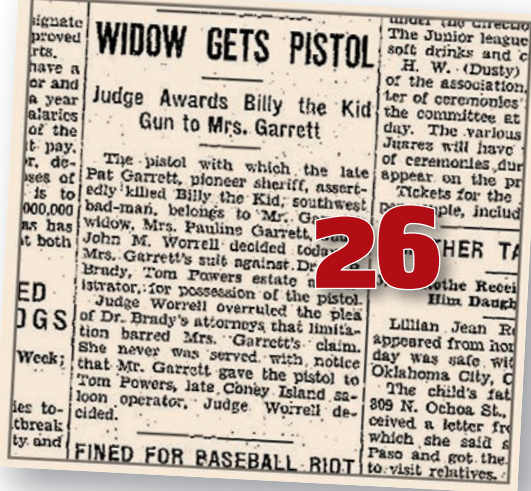
The most celebrated Colorado convict was wooed and loved—despite his life sentence for eating his camping compadres.

—By Kellen Cutsforth

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Western art museums paint a picture of optimism and excitement during a time of changes.

—By Johnny D. Boggs and The Editors of True West

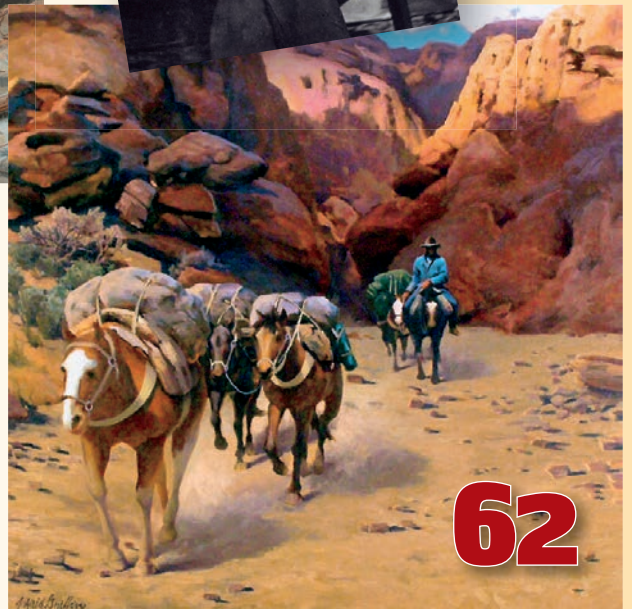
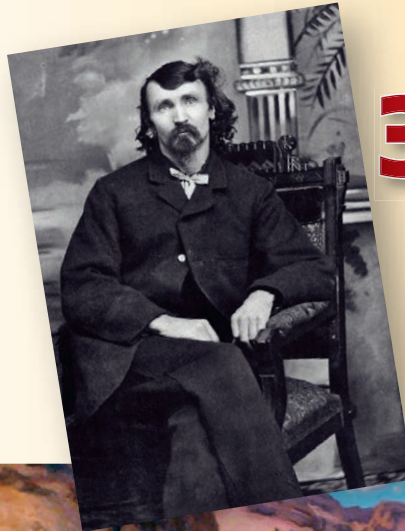


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Cover Design by Dan Harshberger

All Art by Bob Boze Bell and All Images Courtesy True West Archives except image of statue courtesy Buckeye Blake

COMPILED BY THE EDITORS OF *TRUE WEST*

Old Vaquero Sayings

"Fear sees, even when the eyes are closed."



Quotes

"Science has not yet taught us if madness is or is not the sublimity of the intelligence."

—Edgar Allan Poe

"Horse sense is the thing a horse has which keeps it from betting on people."

—W.C. Fields

Comedic masters whose careers started in vaudeville, Mae West and W.C.

Fields made one film together, the highly profitable and popular Western-comedy, *My Little Chickadee* (1940).

Courtesy Universal Pictures



"Ladies who play with fire must remember that smoke gets in their eyes."

—Mae West

"If I had followed my better judgment always, my life would have been a very dull one."

—Edgar Rice Burroughs

"Beware; for I am fearless, and therefore powerful."

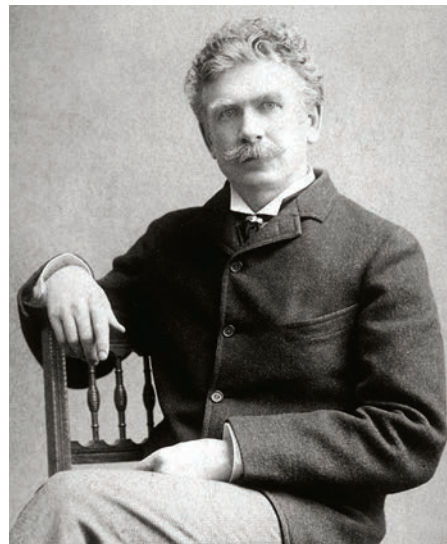
—Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, *Frankenstein*

"The true adventurer goes forth aimless and uncalculating to meet and greet unknown fate."

—O. Henry

"Fear has no brains; it is an idiot. The dismal witness that it bears and the cowardly counsel that it whispers are unrelated."

—Ambrose Bierce, *The Moonlit Road and Other Ghost and Horror Stories*



San Francisco journalist and author of *The Devil's Dictionary*, Ambrose Bierce disappeared in the midst of the Mexican Revolution in Chihuahua, Mexico, in 1913-'14.

True West Archives

"Of course I talk to myself. I like a good speaker, and I appreciate an intelligent audience."

—Dorothy Parker, *The Ladies of the Corridor*

"Looking at these stars suddenly dwarfed my own troubles and all the gravities of terrestrial life."

—H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine*

"Anything one man can imagine, other men can make real."

—Jules Verne, *Around the World in Eighty Days*

"The most merciful thing in the world...is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents."

—H.P. Lovecraft



"Decaf. They can't be far away."

CartoonStock.com

El Chivato Gets His Due

The Hispanic version of the Billy the Kid story has finally arrived three decades after it was predicted.

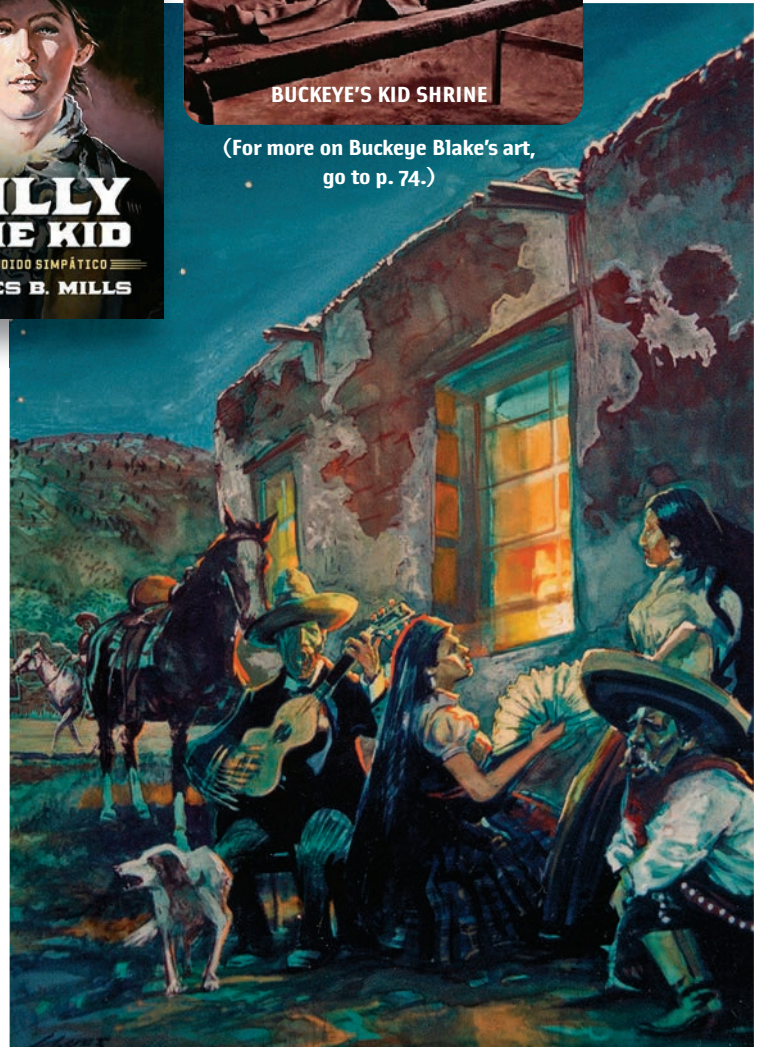
Back in 1991, before my first of three books on Billy the Kid was published, I attended a big symposium in Ruidoso, New Mexico, featuring all the heavyweight Kid scholars. Fred Nolan was there, as were Robert Utley, Paul Andrew Hutton and many others. During the three-day event, speaker after speaker predicted that the next big book on the Kid would be from the Hispanic point of view. And to a person, they all agreed it was long overdue.

Well, I am happy to report that the book has finally arrived three decades later and from an author half a world away. Three years ago I was contacted via email by James B. Mills who wanted to contact Lynda Sánchez, an authority on the Kid's amigo Yginio Salazar. I knew Lynda would be a solid resource for this saucy punk from Down Under, and she would also connect him with Chuck Usmar, another excellent researcher. Full disclosure, he can be a pistol, and I often call him the Little Aussie Bastard, and he calls me The Yankee Wanker. His book is a good one and he has great taste in art. Here, for the first time, is an excerpt from his book on the funeral of the Kid from the people who were actually there. All of it long overdue and a wonderful addition to the Kid library.

On a related note, our Kid Kompadre, Buckeye Blake, has a brilliant idea for a museum piece at the Old Fort Sumner gravesite. We have featured his sculpture on the cover, and it would make an excellent *pièce de résistance* at the long-closed Kid graveyard. Several friends of the magazine are planning big things over there, and while it's too early to make an announcement, let's all root for them to make it happen with Buckeye's sculpture as the centerpiece.



(For more on Buckeye Blake's art, go to p. 74.)



The Kid Serenaded at Casa de Patron

One of my favorite spots on the planet is Casa de Patron in Lincoln, New Mexico. When my family stayed there in the nineties, you could feel the presence of the Kid. That inspired me to do two different versions of this scene, above, based on Lew Wallace's first person description, "I heard singing and music the other night; going to the door, I found the minstrels of the village actually serenading the fellow in his prison!"

"Billy the Kid" Cover Courtesy University of North Texas Press/Artwork by Bob Boze Bell
Image of Billy the Kid statue Courtesy Buckeye Blake



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

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

THE REAL HISTORY OF A HANDCART



When *True West* lands in my mailbox, I turn first to “Truth Be Known” for its wisdom and wit, then I flip to the great double photo always just inside. The July-August issue’s double-truck features a railroading scene in which four men occupy a vehicle described as a handcart, while two stand aside at the right.

As a former news photographer and longtime fan of railroading, may I offer some observations?

The scene is of a track inspection being made soon after track had been laid. That the track is newly laid can be deduced by the paucity of ballast between the ties. Notice that the ties are of unequal length, sawed from round trunks and flattened on two sides.

The vehicle floor is of rough lumber and missing a board or two, showing signs of heavy use. It shows no means of propulsion such as a two-handled lever to drive a crank that would be typical of what is called a “speeder.” It looks like the type of low cart that is used to receive rails off-loaded from a flat car, then rolled to the advancing front as track is being set and spiked.

On the cart, the men in caps are probably track-laying crew supervisors. The one in the forward position, more formally dressed in the hat and high collar, is likely their boss. The man standing is the photographer who made this photo. He is holding a tripod with a camera bellows with no lens. His right hand is gripping something, perhaps a pneumatic bulb to release remotely the shutter of the camera making the picture. Seated at photo-left is a man with his hands on a rod or pole to wedge against the wheel of the cart for braking, or for poling the car forward. The two track workers at the right of the photo just as well may be this day’s means of propulsion.

The man in the dark shirt is holding a spike-driving hammer. Follow the handle down to the ground and you’ll see the head of a sledge or a maul. The man with the suspenders is holding a long bar to lift spiked rail and ties simultaneously for shifting into alignment. The two are accompanying the others to correct any loose spikes or crooked track found during the inspection.

Thanks for the feature on the tourist railroads. I’m headed for Ely, Nevada. See you there.

—Rus Stolling
Fresno, California

Thank you. We love it when our readers provide all the historical details that can be gleaned from just one photograph. —SR

CORRECTION:

A production issue led to a less-than-final version of the Western Books section being published in the July/August issue, including the incorrect version of Ashley Sweeney’s “Build Your Western Library.” To the right is the corrected version. The corrected department can also be read in its entirety online with a subscription at TrueWestMagazine.com.



Courtesy of Justin Haugen

HISTORICAL NOVELIST SHARES HER FAVORITES

Native New Yorker **Ashley E. Sweeney** writes Western historical fiction. Her first two novels, *Eliza Waite* and *Answer Creek*, have won a total of 11 awards, including the New Mexico-Arizona Book Award, the WILLA Literary Award and the Nancy Pearl Book Award. Her third novel, *Hardland*, set in 1899 Arizona Territory, releases in September. [See review in this issue on page 52.] Sweeney lives in Tucson and the Pacific Northwest. She recommends these five Western novels:

1 ***Inland*** by Tea Obreht (Random House): In 1893 Arizona Territory, one day unfolds for the lives of two disparate characters, homesteader Nora Lark and an outlaw and cameleer known only as Lurie, as their lives intersect toward an explosive ending.

2 ***All Things Left Wild*** by James Wade (Blackstone): Reminiscent of Cormac McCarthy, this 2021 WWA Spur Award-winner centers on 16-year-old horse thief Caleb Bentley as he’s on the run with his no-good brother Shelby across Texas in 1910.

3 ***One for the Blackbird, One for the Crow*** by Olivia Hawker (Lake Union): When neighbors Cora Bemis and Substance Webber have an affair in Wyoming in 1876, Cora’s husband murders Webber and he is imprisoned. Over winter, the wives are forced to share lodging and supplies—and plan their futures.

4 ***Whiskey When We’re Dry*** by John Larison (Penguin): Told from orphaned 17-year-old Jesse Harney’s point of view, this novel takes readers through the Rockies as Jesse disguises herself as a man in search of her outlaw brother Noah.

5 ***News of the World*** by Paulette Jiles (William Morrow): In my favorite read of the past five years, Captain Jefferson Kyle Kidd wanders through Texas as an itinerant newspaper reader. Along the way, he’s tasked with taking an orphan girl who had been previously kidnapped by the Kiowas back to her relatives.

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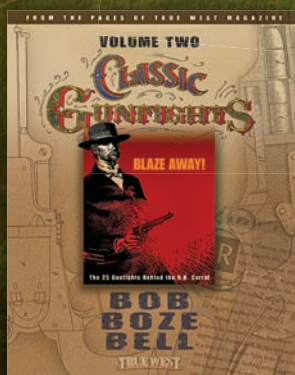
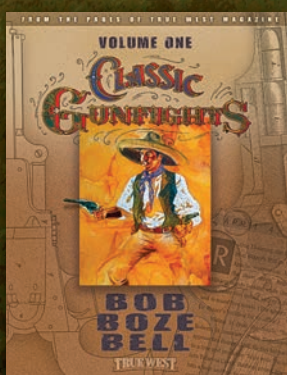
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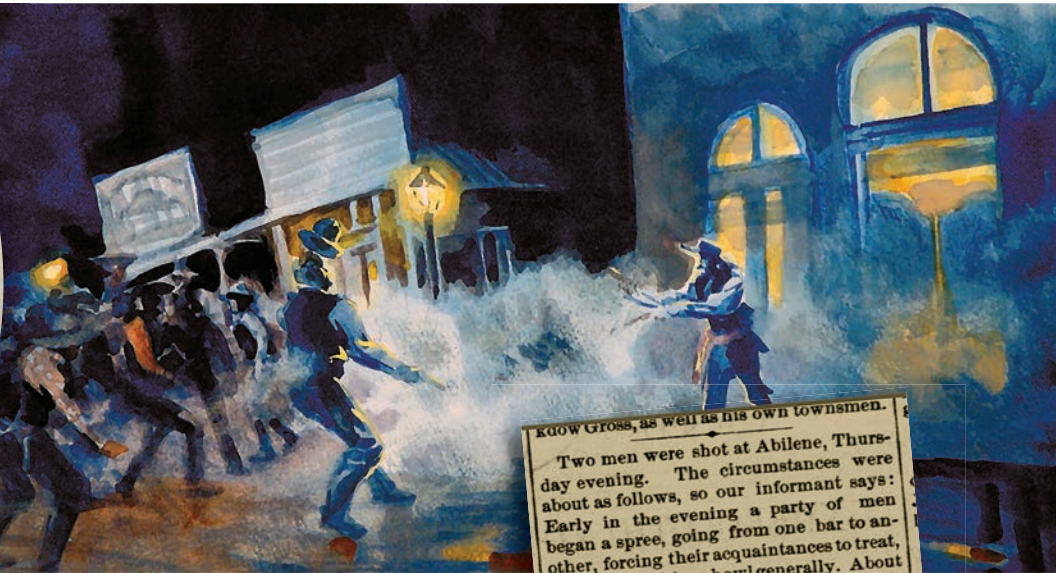
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BY MARK BOARDMAN

Like Father, Like Son

Gunman-gambler Phil Coe followed in his dad's footsteps—even unto death.



Abilene Town Marshal Wild Bill Hickok was on duty at 9 p.m. on October 5, 1871, when he heard pistol shots fired in front of the Alamo Saloon. Texas gambler Phil Coe Jr. (inset) had his pistol drawn at the front of the mob that met Hickok, and when Coe shot at the marshal, Hickok returned fire and mortally wounded him. Public opinion defended Hickok and his subsequent unfortunate killing of his friend and jailer Michael Williams in the same gun battle.

Art and Portrait Courtesy True West Archives/"The Junction City Weekly Union" (Junction City, Kansas), Oct. 7, 1871, Newsclipping Courtesy Newspapers.com

Know Gross, as well as his own townsmen.

Two men were shot at Abilene, Thursday evening. The circumstances were about as follows, so our informant says: Early in the evening a party of men began a spree, going from one bar to another, forcing their acquaintances to treat, and making things howl generally. About 8 o'clock, shots were heard in the "Alamo," a gambling hell; whereupon the City Marshal, Haycock, better known as "Wild Bill," made his appearance. It is said that the leader of the party had threatened to kill Bill, "before frost." As a reply to the Marshal's demand that orders should be preserved, some of the party fired upon him, when, drawing his pistols "he fired with marvelous rapidity and characteristic accuracy," as our informant expressed it, shooting a Texan, named Coe, the keeper of the saloon, we believe, through the abdomen, and grazing one or two more. In the midst of the firing, a policeman rushed in to assist Bill, but unfortunately got in the line of his fire. It being dark, Bill did not recognize him, and supposed him to be one of the party. He was instantly killed. Bill greatly regrets the shooting of his friend. Coe will die. The verdict of the citizens seemed to be unanimously in support of the Marshal, who bravely did his duty.

Phil Coe was a dangerous man, a gambler and saloon owner who was responsible for several deaths before he was shot down by Wild Bill Hickok on October 5, 1871. He came by his nature honestly—er, violently.

Coe's father, Philip Sr., started off in Georgia under an entirely different last name: Haddock. But he left that name and state behind in 1829, when he was accused of murder. A \$750 reward was put on his head, so Phil Sr. headed West under his new last name; Coe was his mother's maiden name. He became a colonist for impresario Stephen F. Austin and received nearly 4,500 acres in Washington County, Texas. Esteemed writer Joseph Rosa says that he didn't change his ways, living a lively and loose existence.

In 1835, he joined in a campaign against the Tawakoni Indians. The next year, the elder Coe joined up with the Texians in their fight for independence from Mexico. Some stories say

he was a captain, in charge of a baggage train at the climactic Battle of San Jacinto. Three years later, the family welcomed Phil Jr., the fourth of 12 children.

Phil Sr. continued to serve Texas off and on through the mid-1840s. It's unclear just what he otherwise was doing during those years. He still owned the land where he settled in the early 1830s, so it's likely he was running a farm/ranch. But it's clear that he liked spending time in saloons and gambling halls and racetracks (he owned several thoroughbreds). But life in the fast lane would ultimately lead to his demise.

In December 1852, Coe was playing poker in a Gonzales County watering hole. One of the other players was a neighbor, John Oliver. At some point in the proceedings, the two men began arguing over one of the hands. Oliver pulled his gun and shot Coe.

But the wounded man was tough. He managed to get to his horse and ride home. Over the next week, Coe laboriously wrote his

will, splitting his estate (which included several slaves) between his wife and children. On December 14, Phil Coe Sr. cashed in his chips; he was buried in the family cemetery.

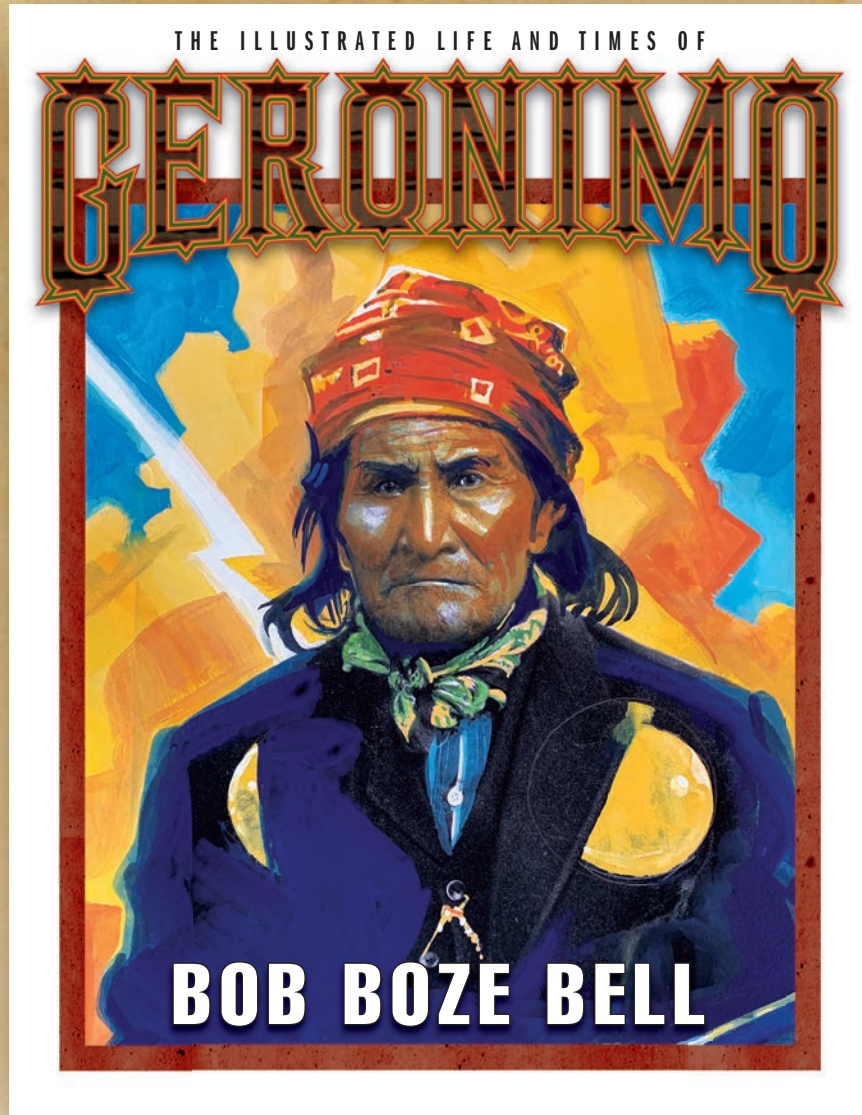
Phil Jr. was just 13 years old when his dad died. But it's apparent that the son didn't learn any life lessons from his father. Nineteen years after the old man's demise, the younger was one of the last men killed by Wild Bill Hickok. Phil Jr. was his own man in one respect: he was not buried in the same cemetery as his father.



“Fasten your seat belt for this one!

Bell’s trade-mark blend of superb artwork, authoritative research, and fast-paced prose—always accompanied by a wicked sense of humor—makes this another masterful, must-have Boze western book.”

—Paul Andrew Hutton



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BY JANA BOMMERSBACH

In This Museum, the Paintings Do Talk

The George Phippen Museum continues to inspire Western artists.



The painting is so expressive, you can almost hear the words of the poem that inspired it:

*“As they was a-ridin’ back to camp
a-packin’ a purty good load
Who should they meet but the Devil hisself
just a prancin’ down the road!”*

*Sez he, “You ornery cowboy skunks,
you better hunt yer holes!
For I’ve come up from Hell’s rim rock
just to gather in your souls.”*

*Sez Sandy Bob, “Ol’ Devil be damned...
we boys is kinda’ tight,
But you ain’t a-gonna’ gather no cowboy souls,
without some kind o’ fight!”*

The beloved cowboy poem—“Tyin’ Knots in the Devil’s Tail”—was written by Gail Gardner in 1917; the painting his family commissioned in 1959 for his 67th birthday present is by George Phippen.

Today it is one of the treasures in the Phippen Museum in Prescott—Arizona Territory’s original capital that claims both men as favorite sons.

It’s a museum dedicated to preserving and encouraging Western artists and named after the man who helped found and then headed the Cowboy Artists of America.

That is a great story. As author Don Dederer described it, “Charlie Russell would have felt right at home among the beer bottles, billows of smoke, sunburned faces and bodacious buffoonery prevailing on a mild night of June 23, 1965, at Bird’s Oak Creek Tavern in Sedona, Arizona.”

The family of Prescott rancher and cowboy Gail Gardner commissioned Gardner’s friend George Phippen to paint Gail and his friend Sandy Bob herding and heading the devil (left), as inspired by Gardner’s famous poem, “Tyin’ Knots in the Devil’s Tail.”



A natural-born artist, George Phippen was born in Iowa in 1915 and raised in Kansas, where he learned to cowboy. After World War II, Phippen relocated to the Prescott area to raise a family and pursue his career as an artist. His beloved cabin studio is currently being restored on the Phippen Museum campus.

All Images Courtesy Phippen Museum, Prescott, AZ

Around that table that night, George Phippen was already the most famous—although his real fame was still down the road—while the other three were newbies to the world of Western art: Charles Dye, John Hampton and Joe Beeler. All would become treasured chroniclers of the Old West in paint and clay and bronze, and all were dedicated to the first declaration of their bylaws: “To perpetuate the memory and culture of the Old West as typified by the late Frederic Remington, Charles Russell, and others...”

George Phippen was elected the first president of the new organization that has grown into a major force in the Western art world. Unfortunately, he died a year later in 1966. Thankfully, he left a treasure trove of work behind—paintings that are marked by their visual storytelling, sense of humor and authenticity down to the smallest detail.

Phippen’s family and friends—including his fellow founders—started planning a museum

to carry his name in 1974. It opened in 1984—every penny coming from fundraisers and community support.

This Memorial Day, it sponsored its 48th annual Western Art Show and Sale. Executive director Edd Kellerman could boast they had 86 artists from all over the country.

The museum also houses the Arizona Rancher & Cowboy Hall of Fame, permanent collections—including the History of the Cowgirl—and continuous rotating exhibits. They recently featured another Prescott treasure, “If Horses Could Talk: The Art of Bill Nebeker.”

Nebeker’s bronze sculptures have a lot in common with George Phippen’s paintings—in both, the work is so precise, the humor is so evident—that the horses do talk. ✦

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

Cowboy Legacy



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BY STEVE FRIESEN

And Now for Something Completely Different

From butterflies to classic Western scenes, sales at the annual Coeur d'Alene Art Auction stunned and surprised collectors.



Butterfly, a very small oil painting created by Albert Bierstadt later in his life, brought \$12,000. A rather radical departure from his usual sweeping landscapes, it not only moves from the macro to the micro but also has abstracted characteristics.

The Coeur d'Alene Art Auction, held on July 23, showcased beautiful Western art by some of the best-known artists of the West. It included gems like Alfred Jacob Miller's *The Lost Greenhorn*, *A Peccary Hunt in Northern Mexico* by Frederic Remington and *Shooting the Buffalo* by Charles Russell. Then there was *Butterfly*, a 6.5 x 9-inch oil done by Albert Bierstadt in 1890. What? Are we talking about Albert Bierstadt, 19th-century America's best-known painter of enormous Western landscapes? Yep, he painted a butterfly.

The Bierstadt painting illustrates one aspect of this year's Coeur d'Alene Art Auction. Among the 330 works for sale were pieces that revealed well-known artists like Bierstadt, experimenting and creating the unexpected...at least unexpected to us today. There were several very capably executed landscape paintings by Carl Rungius, but somehow indistinct and without the bears or other wildlife usually found in his work. And, in addition to several familiar Western landscape paintings by Edgar Payne, the auction offered *Tuna Boats*, an out-of-focus harbor scene. None of these works, which often veered away from literal depictions toward the abstract, sold for as high at the auction as these artists' more familiar paintings. Despite that, they reflect the artists' efforts to develop their craft.



Executed early in his art career, Charles Russell's *Shooting the Buffalo* illustrated a situation in which no hunter wants to get caught, between a raging buffalo and a sheer ravine. The hat on the ground in front of the animal accentuates the peril. The painting brought a top bid of \$700,000

In addition to the aforementioned "experiments," there were plenty of paintings depicting the more realistic images that we typically associate with Western art. Particularly popular were sporting scenes like Philip R. Goodwin's *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, which brought the second highest sale of the day at \$800,000, and William Herbert Dunton's *Treed*, with the highest sale of the day at \$1.2 million. Works by Dunton commanded some of the highest prices at the sale.

The 2022 Coeur d'Alene Art Auction also had impressive works by living artists, bringing in a range of prices, from Jim Norton's *Splittin' 'n*

Gettin' at \$15,000 to Logan Maxwell Hagege's *Where Land Meets Sky*, which hammered out at \$140,000. But the venue was dominated, both in terms of sheer numbers of artwork and in prices realized, by those who have passed on. It was a joy to see a catalog filled with works by Bierstadt, Russell, Payne, Sharp, Remington, Berninghaus and so many others who helped establish the genre of Western art, side by side on the auction block with the work of those who are furthering the genre today. ✦

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.



Sporting themes were particularly popular at the Coeur d'Alene Art Auction. Painted with black and white oils, *A Peccary Hunt in Northern Mexico* (left) by Frederic Remington brought \$160,000. William Herbert Dunton's *Treed* (below, center) gathered the highest sale price at \$1.2 million; with an \$800,000 bid for Philip R. Goodwin's *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea* (below) putting it at second highest.



Banff Country by Carl Rungius brought \$9,000. While his wildlife paintings often have clearly detailed animals within less distinct backgrounds, this small (9 x 11-inch) painting presents a very indistinct landscape with no animals at all.



Among the contemporary artists represented at the auction were Logan Maxwell Hagege and Jim Norton. Each frequently portrays modern-day people who continue the traditions of the West, like the Navajo riders in Hagege's *Where Land Meets Sky* (below, top) and the modern cowboy practicing his trade in Norton's *Splittin' 'n Gettin'* (below, bottom).



Alfred Jacob Miller created several different versions of his popular painting *The Lost Greenhorn*. The painting portrays a cook who strayed from a hunting camp and became lost in the vastness of the prairie. This version brought \$400,000 at the Coeur d'Alene Art Auction.

All Images Courtesy
the Coeur d'Alene Art Auction

UPCOMING AUCTIONS

September 19-24, 2022
Buffalo Bill Art Show & Sale
Rendezvous Royale (Cody, WY)
RendezvousRoyale.org • 307-587-5002

October 5, 2022
Sporting & Collector Firearms Auction #1041
Rock Island Auction Co. (Rock Island, IL)
RockIslandAuction.com • 309-797-1500

November 1, 2022
The Collection of G. Andrew Bjurman
Bonhams (Los Angeles, CA)
Bonhams.com • 760-567-1744



Edward Payne's *Tuna Boats*, with subject matter and a blurred appearance unlike his more familiar Western landscapes, brought \$27,500.



BY JAMES B. MILLS

A FITTING FUNERAL

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO EL CHIVATO?

Billy arrived at the home of Celsa and Saval Gutiérrez, where he sometimes had a *siesta*, instead of the Maxwell house. He was carrying a hock of beef leg and headed into the kitchen before returning to the room where Celsa and her husband were situated.

"Celsa, I brought some meat for you to make my supper," the Kid said.

Although Billy presumed *Señora* Gutiérrez could manage something with it, upon seeing the hock of a leg in the kitchen, the *güero* beauty knew it was pointless to even try.

"*Beely*, this meat that you brought is no more than a bone," Celsa called out. "It doesn't have any meat."

"Give me a knife to go get some good meat," Billy answered from the other room in Spanish. "And tell *Don* Pedro that I took the meat so that he doesn't think that another stole the meat."

Celsa's seven-year-old illegitimate son Candido watched as Billy took the butcher knife that his mother loaned him. The Kid headed outside and made his way down inside the white pickett fence parallel with the western end of the parade ground. A



EL CHIVATO

Henry McCarty, aka Billy the Kid, spoke flawless Spanish which endeared him to the local Hispano community. The mutual respect earned him the nickname *El Chivato*—the Little Goat.

All Illustrations by Bob Boze Bell and All Images Courtesy True West Archives Unless Otherwise Noted

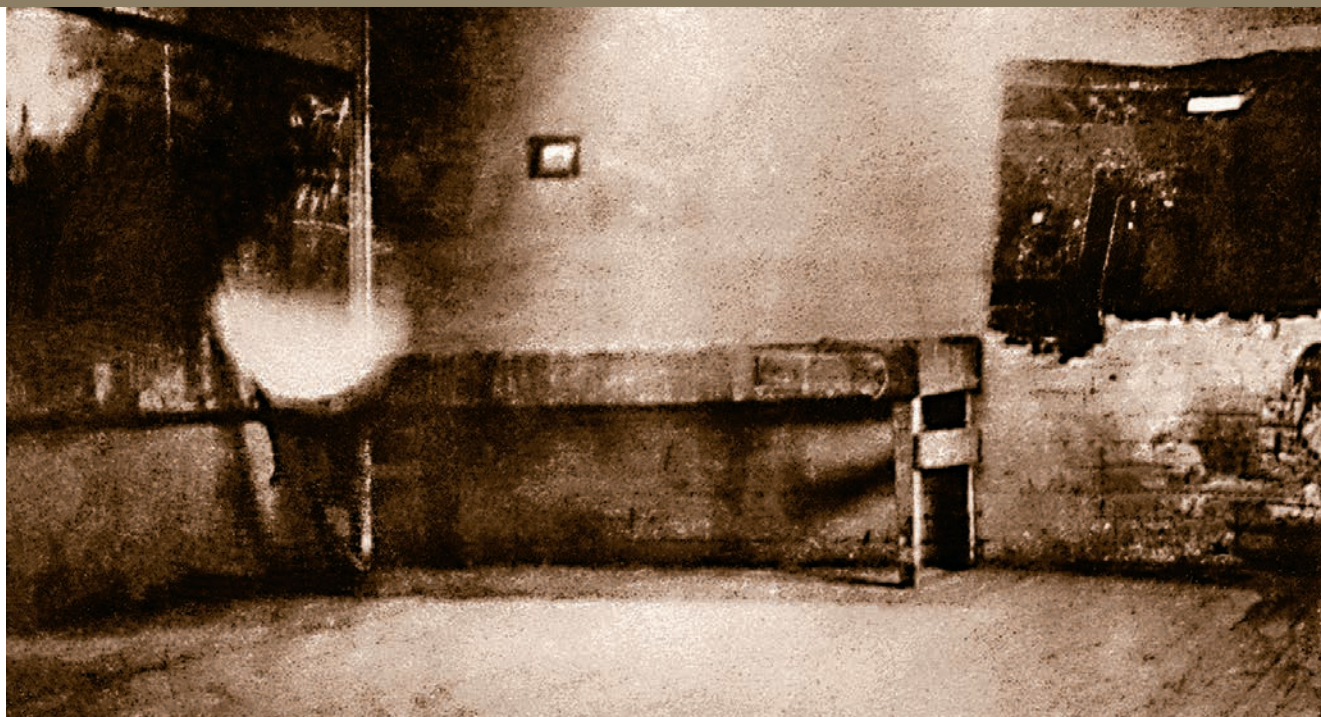
full moon shone down upon him; he was in his stocking feet, dark pants and a white dress-shirt with a silk handkerchief around his neck. He briskly walked past the dance hall and flower garden to his left and was fastening his trousers as he approached the Maxwell house. It was almost 12:30 in the morning of Friday July 15, 1881.

Billy was strolling toward the front of the Maxwell house when he suddenly spotted a shadowy figure sitting on the edge of the porch in front of the small gateway leading out toward the old parade ground. He would have spotted this *hombre* sitting in the darkness sooner had his view not been obstructed by the post of the gate. He quickly pulled his double-action Colt revolver and threw down on the stranger while springing onto the Maxwell porch.

"¿*Quién es?* (Who is it?)" Billy asked. Receiving no answer, he began backing away toward Pete Maxwell's bedroom door. "¿*Quién es?*" the Kid asked again. "¿*Quién es?*"

The unfamiliar fellow sitting on the edge of the porch stood up and stepped toward

FOR BILLY THE KID



him, telling him in Spanish not to be alarmed and that he shouldn't get hurt. John W. Poe had no idea it was Billy the Kid he was giving these assurances to, thinking it was a guest of Maxwell's.

Billy didn't recognize Poe either, having never laid eyes on him. With the shadowy figure of Kip McKinney, whom Billy had also never seen, watching on from outside the fence, John W. Poe continued to advance toward the Kid to reassure him. Billy was unconvinced by the stranger's assurances and backed into the doorway of Pete Maxwell's bedroom.

"¿Quién es?" he asked once again, before disappearing from Poe's sight.

Appearing as a silhouette in the moonlit doorway of Pedro Maxwell's bedroom, Billy slowly stepped through the darkness across the carpet toward Pete Maxwell's bed with his revolver in his right hand and the butcher knife in his left. He then leaned forward and reached out toward the presumably asleep Pedro.

The Kid's body was carried from the bedroom where he was killed in Pete Maxwell's house to a workbench in the fort's carpenter shop. Hispano women washed his body and prepared him for his wake and prayer vigil, which was immediately held and continued until morning.

"¿Pedro, quiénes son estos hombres afuera? (Pete, who are those men outside?)" the Kid asked.

As Billy reached toward the bed, unbeknownst to him, his hand had almost brushed the knee of Pat Garrett, who was sitting on the side of the bed next to Maxwell. Finally sensing the presence of someone sitting at the head of the bed, Billy raised his revolver and began stepping swiftly back across the room toward the door.

"¿Quién es?" the Kid asked.

"*El es* (It's him)," Pete Maxwell whispered as softly as possible to Garrett.

"Who is it?" Billy asked once more while peering through the darkness.

While remaining seated at the head of Maxwell's bed, Pat Garrett raised his single-action revolver, cocked the hammer, and fired at the silhouette figure standing in the room. With a split-second flash of light filling the bedroom, the shot hit Billy in the left side of his chest, just above the heart. As the Kid fell forward onto the carpet with a horrid burning sensation coursing through his chest, Pat Garrett leaped off the side of the bed and fired another shot, this one ricocheting off a wall and slamming into the headboard of Maxwell's bed.

Pat Garrett had barely finished squeezing the trigger for the second time before he was bolting from the darkened bedroom, running through the doorway, and brushing past John W. Poe outside. Almost as quickly, Pete Maxwell came

running frantically behind him, entangled in bedclothes and almost slamming into Poe, who instinctively raised his gun on him.

“Don’t shoot!” Maxwell cried. “Don’t shoot!”

With his heart racing, Pat Garrett reached over and swatted Poe’s gun downwards.

“Don’t shoot Maxwell!” the sheriff said.

The slight sound of a groan and gasping had been heard coming from inside the bedroom, until silence fell.

“That was the Kid that came in there onto me,” Garrett said to Poe. “And I think I have got him.”

“Pat, the Kid would not have come to this place,” Poe replied. “You have shot the wrong man.”

“I am sure it was him,” Garrett asserted. “I know his voice too well to be mistaken.”

The two shots Pat Garrett had fired were heard throughout Fort Sumner, and residents soon began arriving on the scene. Jesús Silva, Francisco Lovato and Paco Anaya all quickly made their way toward the Maxwell home, with others following suit. When Silva, Lovato and Anaya arrived, they saw Pat Garrett standing alongside his two deputies in front of the Maxwell house. Standing with them were Pete Maxwell, *Doña Luz* Maxwell and Deluvina Maxwell. Manuel Pedro Abreu and Pablo and Rebecca Beaubien had also made their way there after hearing the shots. Paulita Maxwell was there too, after having been awakened in her bedroom by the gunshots. Many of Fort Sumner’s other residents also began to emerge and wanted to know what had happened. Word was already spreading that *Bilito* had gone into *Don Pedro*’s bedroom and been killed.



MIDNIGHT FOR BILLY

Pat Garrett was reluctant to venture back inside Pete Maxwell’s bedroom and confirm it was indeed Billy the Kid whom he had shot. Instead, Pat and his deputies watched as Deluvina Maxwell retrieved a lamp.

“¡*Voy a entrar!* (I’m going in!)” she announced.

Jesús Silva accompanied Deluvina down the porch to Pete Maxwell’s bedroom and cautiously tapped on the door.

“I no want to hurt you, *Beely*,” Silva called out. “It’s Jesús, and I’m comin’ in!”

When there was no answer, Jesús and Deluvina slowly entered the eerily silent bedroom. As they peered through the darkness with use of the lamp, they found the slight frame of a young man with a head of brown hair lying facedown on the carpet. They turned the lifeless body over and a familiar boyish face appeared within the dim glow of the light. Deluvina immediately started to cry. Henry McCarty, alias William H. Bonney, was dead. He was around 20 or 21 years old. Deluvina soon emerged from Pete Maxwell’s bedroom with tears streaming down her face.

“¡*Mi chiquito está muerto!*” (My little boy is dead!) she cried.

The Navajo woman’s sobbing soon turned to rage as she proceeded to unleash a verbal tirade on Pat Garrett, calling him every vile name she could lace her tongue to.

“You pisspot!” Deluvina cursed him while thumping his chest. “You son of a bitch!”

Pete Maxwell procured a tallow candle from *Doña Luz*’s bedroom at the other end of the house. He placed it on the windowsill before accompanying Pat Garrett and Kip McKinney into the room. Making their own examination of the scene, Poe recalled, “We saw a man lying stretched upon his back, dead, in the middle of the room, with a six-shooter lying at his right hand and a butcher knife at his left. Upon examining the body, we found it to be that of Billy the Kid.”

“We searched long and faithfully—found both my bullet marks and none other,” recalled Pat Garrett. “We examined his pistol—a self-cocker, caliber 41. It had five cartridges and one shell in the chambers, the hammer resting on the shell... [T]his shell looked as though it had been shot sometime before.”

“There wasn’t even one Mexican cent in the outlaw’s pockets when the officers searched him,” recalled Jesús Silva. “Pat Garrett took his gun.”

At one point, John W. Poe saw Paulita Maxwell standing and observing Billy’s body for a considerable length of time. Her face was inexpressive, presumably from shock. The tears eventually came, and she had to be consoled by other young women in the vicinity. If Billy had spoken truthfully when telling Martín Chávez of his willingness to die for Paulita several months earlier, then he had fulfilled his vow.

A Querida In Every Plaza



EMILY SCHULANDER



CELSA FLOREZ



MINNIE SHIELD



FREDRICKE DEOLAVERA



DELUVINA MAXWELL



LILY HUNTRESS



MYSTERIOUS MAMACITA



NASARIA YERBY



CARLOTTA BACA



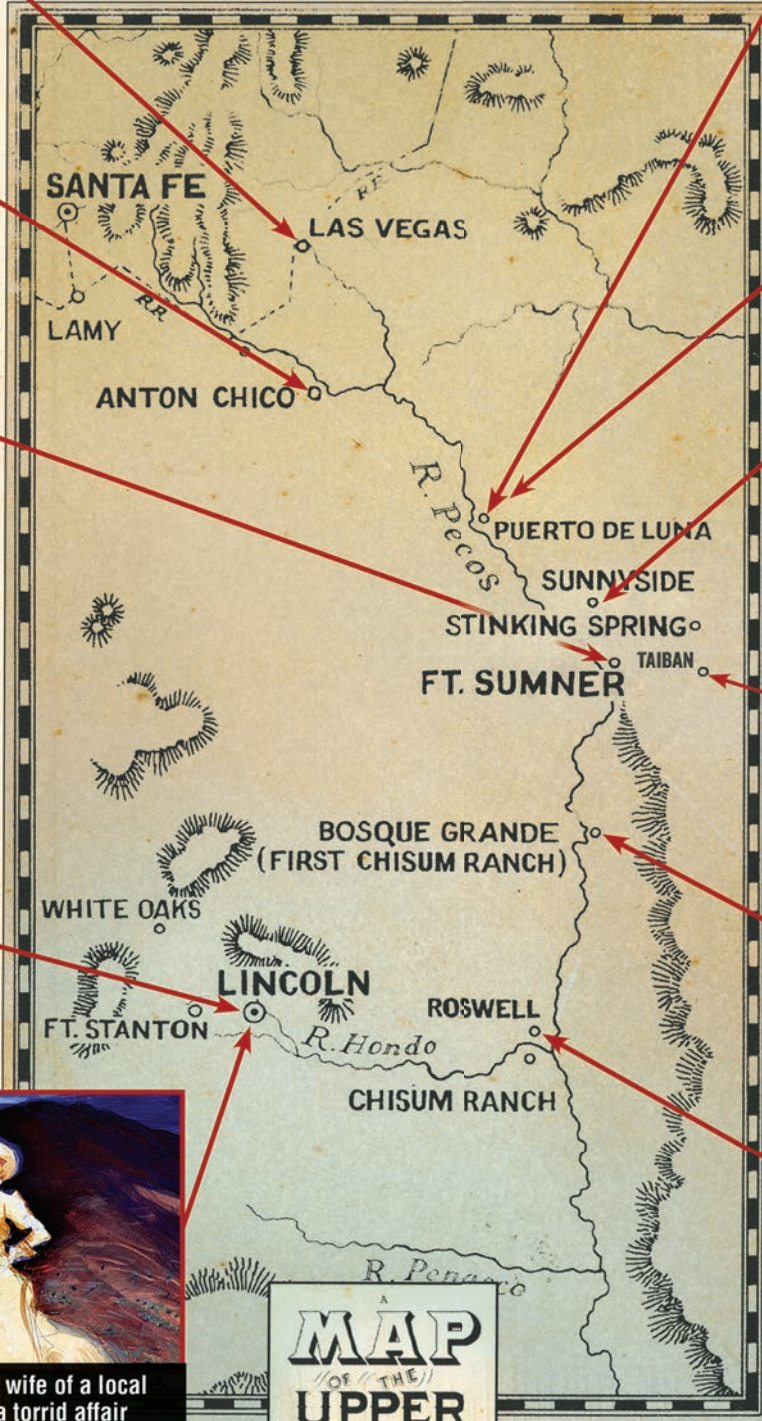
SALLIE CHISUM



LINCOLN HONEY: The wife of a local merchant, she had a torrid affair with the Kid and told no one.



EMILY BRUJA



A
MAP
(OF THE)
**UPPER
PECOS**

(DRAWN BY BOB STEINHILBER)

Billy loved them all, but he took a bullet in the heart for one of them. The question is, which one?

Cursed and Despised

With Deluvina Maxwell and Jesús Silva confirming Billy's death, their anger was soon shared by many Hispanos who gathered at the scene. While some of the *señoritas* cried and consoled each other, men shook their fists in anger and cursed the gringo lawmen. "Billy had been very popular at Fort Sumner and had a great many friends, all of whom were indignant toward Pat Garrett," recalled Francisco Lovato. "If a leader had been present, Garrett and his two officers would have received the same fate they dealt Billy."

With tensions rising and some of the Hispanos hurling insults at them also being armed, Pat Garrett, John W. Poe and Kip McKinney retreated into the Maxwell home. "We spent the remainder of the night on the Maxwell premises, keeping constantly on our guard, as we expected attack by the friends of the dead man," recalled Poe.

"Pat Garrett and his two companions were badly frightened, and did not dare to sleep that night," remembered Jesús Silva. "They remained awake, arms in readiness for any emergency." Despite the outrage expressed by so many, no attempt at reprisal was made. "Someone in Fort Sumner must have given Billy away," Silva later correctly surmised.

Jesús Silva and several *señoritas* asked permission to move Billy's body. At Pete Maxwell's suggestion, William Bonney's slender corpse was carried out of his bedroom to the old carpenter shop on the eastern side of the fort and laid out on a workbench. After his



Paulita Maxwell was the Kid's *querida*. His love for her was well-known in Fort Sumner, and he hoped to marry her. But a bullet from Pat Garret's gun terminated that dream in the home of her brother, Pete Maxwell, on July 15, 1881.

fatal gunshot wound was sealed with a rag, Hispano women gently washed and cleaned the Kid's body in preparation for his impending wake. Candles were soon lit and placed around his corpse as part of "properly conducting a wake for the dead," John W. Poe recalled. While Deluvina Maxwell and Hispano women cried and prayed over Billy's body, Vicente Otero stood observing the wake the remainder of the night along with Juan Medina, Juan Nepamuceno Pacheco and many more of the Kid's *amigos*.

Word of Billy's death spread quickly throughout the old fort, with frantic messengers running to each adobe residence to share the news with those who hadn't heard it. With



Deluvina Maxwell, a former Navajo slave and housekeeper, became Billy's surrogate mother and most devoted supporter in Fort Sumner. She outlived all those involved in Billy's killing.

many locals arriving in the vicinity, the question "who killed him?" was asked by many and soon answered for all. Many *señoritas* and *señoras* wailed in grief, crying "*pobre Beely* (poor Billy)." It was a sentiment later shared by Jesús Silva.

"Poor old Billy," Silva said years later. "Billy was a good boy—he just had to do that way."

A Local Hero's Hispano Funeral

On the morning of July 15, 1881, a coffin was constructed by Jesús Silva with help from Vicente Otero and others. Pat Garrett had advised them to use ceiling planks stripped from an abandoned adobe house for the coffin's construction. Garrett also gave Pete Maxwell \$25 to buy some new clothes in which Billy's corpse could be dressed for burial. Maxwell accompanied Manuel Abreu to his store, where he purchased a beige suit, shirt, undergarments and a pair of stockings. Paco Anaya, his brother-in-law, Iginio García, and several others then dressed Billy's corpse in the new clothes.

Word of Billy the Kid's death had spread rapidly through the surrounding countryside, and Fort Sumner was soon inundated with the arrivals of Milnor Rudolph, Mike Cosgrove and others. At Pat Garrett's insistence, a coroner's report was held. Justice of the Peace Alejandro Segura had been sent for to conduct the report and appoint a coroner's jury. The jury included Milnor Rudolph, who acted as foreman, along with Saval Gutiérrez, 37-year-old sheepherder Lorenzo Jaramillo, Pedro Antonio Lucero, Antonio Savedra and José Silva. Except for the Kid's final words, the report was written entirely in Spanish,

FOR BILLY THE KID



Sheriff Pat Garrett's shooting of Billy the Kid in the Maxwell home in the dark earned him more infamy than the fame and fortune he thought it would. He died with two bullets in his back on the side of the road near Las Cruces on February 29, 1908.



After William Bonney's death in 1881, Paulita Maxwell married José Felix Jaramillo on January 14, 1883. They had three children, but he was abusive and she eventually left the marriage.

with the illiterate Gutiérrez, Jaramillo, and Silva signing with an "X." The coroner's report ended with the declaration:

We the jury unanimously find that William Bonney has been killed by a bullet in the left breast in the region of the heart, the same having been fired from a pistol in the hand of Pat F. Garrett, and our verdict is that the act of said Garrett was justifiable homicide and we are unanimous in the opinion that the gratitude of all the community is due to the said Garrett for his deed and is worthy of being rewarded.

The final sentence was certainly written at the behest of Pat Garrett to ensure he would be able to claim the \$500 reward money from acting-Governor William Ritch. While some citizens throughout the Territory would later shake Garrett's hand and congratulate him for ridding the Southwest of a notorious outlaw, the

majority of Hispano citizens of Fort Sumner were hardly grateful to him, nor would they have felt he was worthy of being rewarded for killing their *Bilito* in the middle of the night.

After Billy's body was placed in his coffin, it was moved to Beaver Smith's saloon, where it remained on display until time for burial. Jesús Silva and Vicente Otero dug a grave down in the old cemetery. In the afternoon, William H. Bonney's coffin was sealed and loaded into the back of Vicente Otero's creaky old wagon. With a throng of at least 170 people following behind, the coffin was slowly led down to the fort's old military cemetery by two lean ponies, with the loud creaking from the turning wheels of Otero's rickety wagon serving as Billy's requiem mass.

A year after Peter "Pedro" Maxwell assisted Sheriff Pat Garrett in the killing of Billy the Kid, the young patriarch of the Maxwell family fortune posed with his associates Juan Patron (left) and possibly Pablo Anaya (right). Pete's role in Billy's killing on the night July 14, 1881, was condemned by the local Hispanos of Fort Sumner.

He died in Fort Sumner on June 21, 1898.



A FITTING FUNERAL

Interviewed in 1936, Jesús Silva of Fort Sumner claimed that he found The Kid walking after his escape from the Lincoln County Courthouse and that he guided the fugitive to the Paco Anaya home, eight miles south of Fort Sumner. The Kid, hampered by his leg irons, walked part of the way, while Jesús rode. Silva left The Kid at the Anaya home, and claimed he stayed for almost a month.

“Most of the native people who lived in town went to his funeral,” recalled Deluvina Maxwell. “Practically every man, woman and child in town followed the body to the little cemetery,” remembered Paulita Maxwell.

When the large funeral procession reached the old military cemetery, pallbearers Jesús Silva, Paco Anaya, Vicente Otero, Saval Gutiérrez, Antonio Savedra and others lowered the coffin into the freshly dug grave to the southwest of the northern entrance. In the opposite direction of the northeast corner lay the unmarked graves of Tom Folliard, Charlie Bowdre and Joe Grant.

After the coffin was lowered and the grave filled, a sermon in Spanish was likely said by someone before the large congregation dispersed. Sheriff Pat Garrett dismissed his two deputies and rode out of Fort Sumner with Pete Maxwell after carrying out the job he had been elected to do. He was riding for Las Vegas before heading to Santa Fe. After meeting resistance from acting-Governor William Ritch over the \$500 reward, he met with Thomas B. Catron and Marcus Brunswick for support in attempting to secure the money. “There was no use chasing him in that country with the start he had,” Garrett later said. “I waited until I thought he would reach his sweetheart’s at the Maxwell ranch house, and—I got him.”

After a small cross placed at his gravesite crudely bearing his most famous alias had been stolen a short time later, the grave of

Henry McCarty, aka William H. Bonney, was marked by a plain board bearing the stenciled words:

BILLY THE KID

Deluvina Maxwell, forever harboring an intense hatred for Pat Garrett and his deputies, left flowers on the grave of her *chiquito* in the summer for many years. One can only imagine her reaction had she known the role Pedro Maxwell had played in bringing about her little boy’s death.

In Anton Chico, *Padre* Antonio Redon could be heard to remark, “Billy did not have a bad heart; most of his crimes were



These four men claimed to be Billy the Kid’s pallbearers: (l.-r.) Charlie Foor, Jesús Silva, Vicente Otero and Paco Anaya, but Foor was not. Silva and Otero helped build The Kid’s coffin, and they dug his grave in the old cemetery. The additional pallbearers were Saval Gutierrez and Antonio Savedra.

THE CHICA FROM ANTON CHICO

As we have already seen, Billy had many affairs with beautiful women up and down the Pecos. Legend says one of them, from Anton Chico, haunted his dreams to the day he died.

those of vengeance.” Two weeks after William Bonney’s death, the *Grant County Herald* offered its own epitaph; “He was a low-down vulgar cut-throat, with probably not one redeeming quality.”

No “low-down vulgar cut-throat” was ever so well-liked and fondly remembered by so many who knew him.



James B. Mills was born in 1983 and resides in Australia. His next book, *In The Days of Billy the Kid: The Frontier Lives of José Chávez y Chávez, Juan Patrón, Martín Chávez, and Yginio Salazar*, is currently in the works.

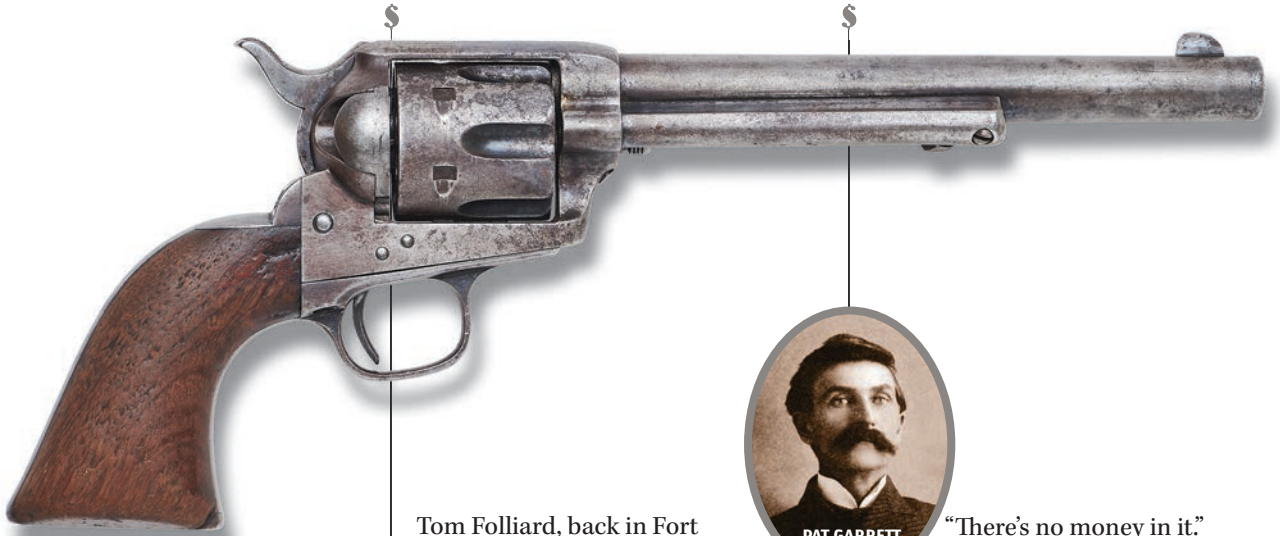
Editor’s Note: “A Fitting Funeral for Billy the Kid What Really Happened to El Chivato?” is an exclusive excerpt from *Billy the Kid: El Bandido Simpático* by James B. Mills, published by the University of North Texas Press. To read more about Billy’s last hours, turn to page 40, and for a review of Mills’ *Billy the Kid*, please turn to page 50.



BILLY THE KID

El Bandido Simpático

The Six-Million-Dollar Gun



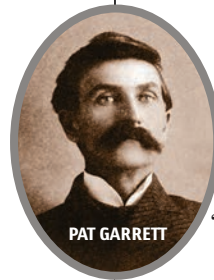
The real story behind Pat Garrett's infamous pistol that killed Billy the Kid

In the fall of 1880, Sheriff-elect Pat Garrett was given his marching orders by the cattle king of New Mexico, John Chisum: "Clean out that squad east of Sumner." On December 23, Garrett and a motley crew of Texas cowboys had surrounded a rock house at Stinking Spring, New Mexico, in the freezing dark, and as the sun came up, they coldly shot down the first person who walked out the door. It turned out to be Charlie Bowdre and not the Kid. Garrett's posse had already shot and killed another of Billy's pards,

Tom Folliard, back in Fort Sumner. With the death of Bowdre, two of the Kid's gang were toast. After a long standoff, everyone inside eventually surrendered and gave up their arms. They included Billy the Kid, Dirty Dave Rudabaugh, Tom Pickett and Billy Wilson. At some point Pat Garrett took a liking to Billy Wilson's Winchester and pistol, and like lawmen had been doing for a long time, he purloined these two guns for his own use.

Beaver Smith ended up with the Kid's Winchester, Frank Stewart was gifted the Kid's horse by Billy himself and the young outlaw is reported to have given his pistol to the mail carrier's brother Mike Cosgrove.

As a side note, after a standoff in Las Vegas, New Mexico, on December 27, Garrett delivered his prisoners to the Santa Fe jail, where the Kid spent three months before being tried in Mesilla and sentenced to hang. While in the jail, a reporter asked him what he thought about getting as famous as Buffalo Bill, and the Kid replied,



"There's no money in it." Seven months later, Garrett dispatched Billy the Kid with Wilson's seven-and-a-half inch, .44 single-action Colt.

So, how do we know, 141 years later, that the gun that recently sold for over \$6 million is this same gun?

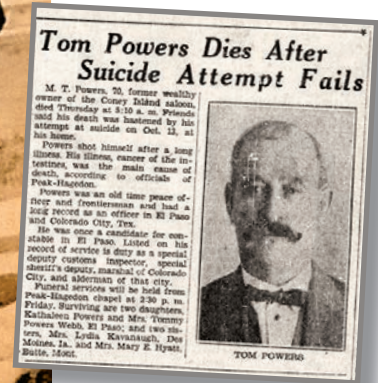
And, more importantly, what does Pancho Villa have to do with this whole story?

And, finally, who would pay that kind of money for a gun, even if it turns out it is the actual gun that killed the Kid?

The Facts Behind the Gun that Killed the Kid

● In the early '80s—that would be the 1980s—I was in a small cafe-saloon in Goldfield, Nevada, and behind the bar on the wall was a nondescript pistol, and under it was a sign that said, "This is the ONLY gun in the West that did not kill Billy the Kid."

● Sometimes it seems like there are enough Billy the Kid guns to arm



President Theodore Roosevelt appointed former sheriff Pat Garrett as the collector of customs in El Paso, Texas, in 1901. Four years later, Garrett invited his friend Tom Powers (second from right) to a lunch with the President in San Antonio under the guise that the bar owner/gambler was a powerful cattleman.

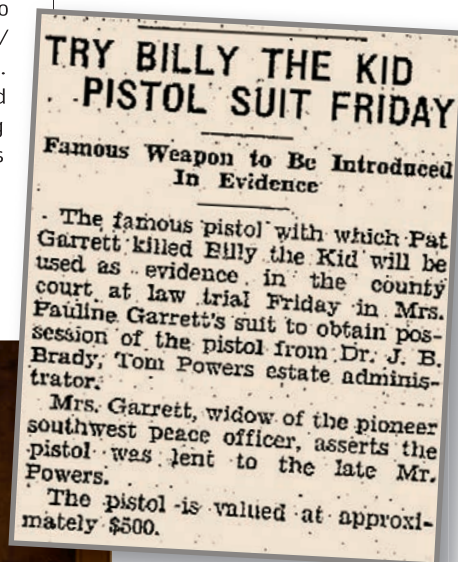
The press had a heyday and Roosevelt was furious, resulting in the infamous lawman losing his lucrative federal position.

Courtesy True West Archives

an Army regiment. They show up everywhere and often. During a debate about all this in the 1930s, a newspaper reported there were at

least 50 guns that claimed to be the killer of the Kid.

● Pat Garrett rode the fame of killing the Kid all the way to the White House. In 1901 he was called to Washington and got the job as Customs Inspector in El Paso, Texas. It was the top of the roller coaster for the old lawman. But the Rough Riders Reunion in San Antonio, in 1905, did him in when Garrett introduced his friend Tom Powers as a "cattleman," when Powers was a



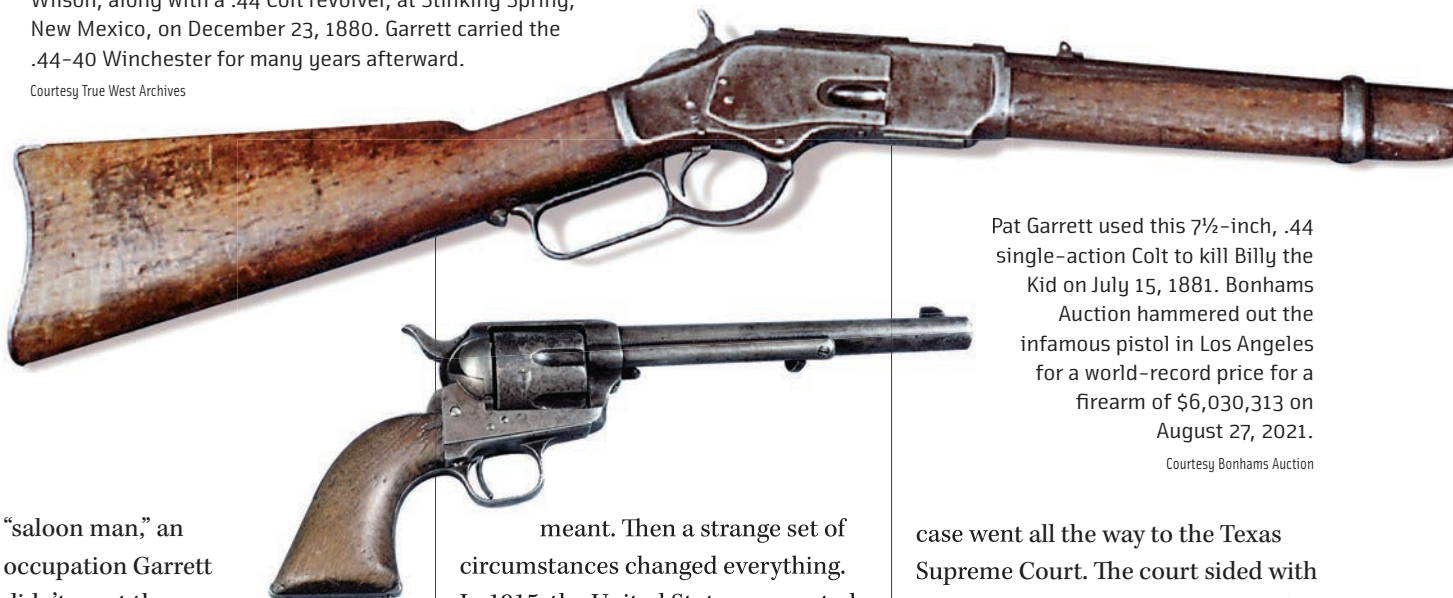
On October 7, 1934, Texas courts sided with Mrs. Apolinaria Garrett on the ownership of the controversial Colt .44 that her husband used to kill Billy the Kid.

Courtesy True West Archives/Newspaper Clippings
Courtesy Newspapers.com



Lincoln County Sheriff Pat Garrett took this rifle off Billy Wilson, along with a .44 Colt revolver, at Stinking Spring, New Mexico, on December 23, 1880. Garrett carried the .44-40 Winchester for many years afterward.

Courtesy True West Archives



Pat Garrett used this 7½-inch, .44 single-action Colt to kill Billy the Kid on July 15, 1881. Bonhams Auction hammered out the infamous pistol in Los Angeles for a world-record price for a firearm of \$6,030,313 on August 27, 2021.

Courtesy Bonhams Auction

“saloon man,” an occupation Garrett didn’t want the president to know about because there were suspicions about Pat’s drinking issues. Of course, after the Texas newspapers ran this item, then corrected Garrett, the president felt like a “chump” and Garrett wasn’t reinstated.

- Pat Garrett drank more, lost money and asked for a loan from the same Tom Powers who owned The Coney Island Saloon in El Paso, Texas. Powers was then loaned the gun for display, or he took it as collateral, or he flat out bought it. Powers had a signed agreement with Pat’s signature and the serial number on the pistol.

- In 1908, Pat Garrett was assassinated while urinating along the road to Las Cruces, which prompted his biographer, Leon Metz, to dryly note, “It’s the only time in history a man has been assassinated while urinating that the defendant claimed self-defense.”

- And then the story went dark. The Kid was forgotten, and nobody cared about the pistol or what it

meant. Then a strange set of circumstances changed everything. In 1915, the United States supported Vestuciano Carranza, and a crime reporter from Chicago covered the attack on Columbus, New Mexico, by Pancho Villa. Later, that same intrepid reporter went to El Paso and decided to go to the Coney Island Saloon for a beer. While enjoying his brew he asked the bartender what the significance of the pistol behind the bar was. The result: the reporter Walter Noble Burns published *The Saga of Billy the Kid* in 1924, and suddenly The Kid was back on the map.

- In October 1930, Tom Powers, rich, despondent and riddled with cancer, shot himself in the heart at his house on Wyoming Street in El Paso. Incredibly, Powers lived for three months and died in January of 1931.

- Widowed and poor in the middle of a national Depression, Mrs. Pat Garrett sued the Powers estate to return the gun. The Powers estate claimed the gun was payment for bad debt and not a loan, and they had the paperwork to prove it. The

case went all the way to the Texas Supreme Court. The court sided with a lower appellate court that stated Pat couldn’t have signed over the gun without his wife’s consent, and on October 7, 1934, Apolinaria Garrett stood on the front porch of her modest Las Cruces, New Mexico, home holding the returned Colt. She was comforted by the fact that someone told her it could be worth as much as \$500.

- Two weeks later, after riding in the Roswell, New Mexico, parade as the grand marshal, Mrs. Pat Garrett died and the valuable pistol is kept in the family until 1983, when Jarvis Garrett sells it to a collector, who then sells it to Jim and Theresa Earle of College Station, Texas. Jim also bought the Wilson Winchester. It is believed that Jim paid in the ballpark of \$45,000 to \$150,000 for the gun. With the passing of Jim Earle, the daughters put it up for auction at Bonhams, where it sold for over \$6 million. I would say it has very solid provenance as being the actual pistol that killed the Kid.



Who Bought the Gun?

Now, as for the question of who would have paid that price? It is a bit of a mystery because during the Bonham auction the buyer was on the phone and he requested his name not be used. Now everyone in our history world has one suspect in mind, the one who we think has the ponies and the motive to pull this off. And I think if you watch our video of an event at the Denver Merchandise Mart from 2010, you might recognize who that would be.

And, by the way, we HOPE he did buy the pistol because then both the only known photo AND the pistol belong to the same person. Someone we know cares about preserving the history of the Wild West.

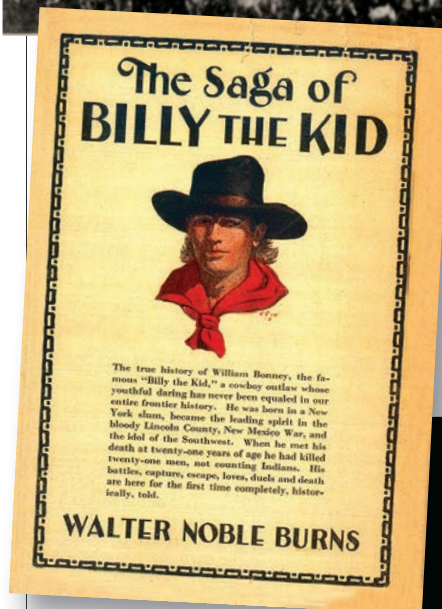
Last Word

“There’s no money in it.”

—Billy the Kid

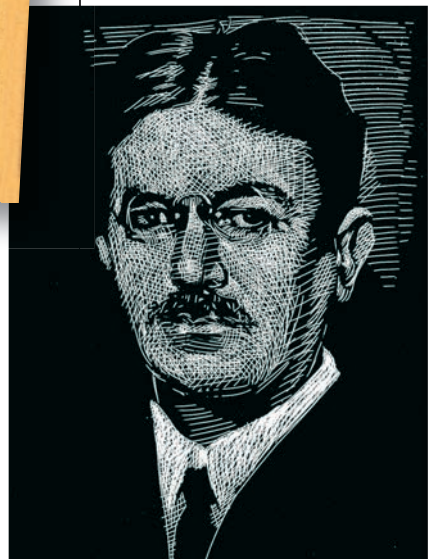


Author’s Note: I want to thank Samuel K. Dolan for the fabulous newspaper clippings from El Paso, Mark Lee Gardner, for his research on this piece, and James B. Mills.



Historians believe Billy the Kid and his fellow Regulators were hiding in this rock house at Stinking Spring on December 23, 1880, when Pat Garrett and his posse attacked them, killing Charlie Bowdre and capturing The Kid, Billy Wilson, Tom Pickett and Dave Rudabaugh.

Courtesy True West Archives

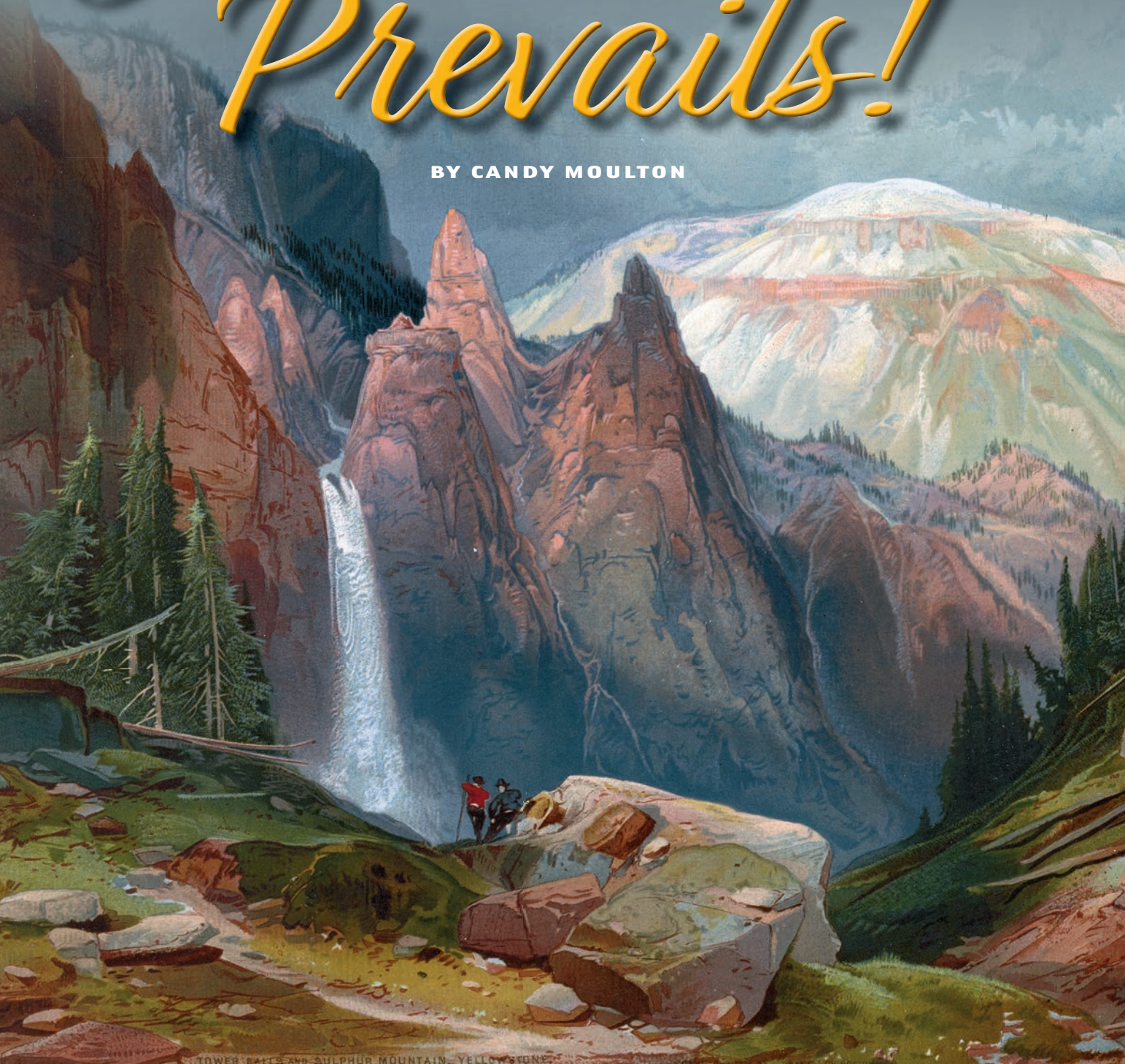


After newspaper writer Walter Noble Burns discovered Pat Garrett’s gun that killed Billy the Kid in the Coney Island Saloon in downtown El Paso, Texas, it inspired his authorship of the groundbreaking *The Saga of Billy the Kid*.

Coney Island Saloon Photo Courtesy Times Blumenthal Photo Collection/Book Cover and Walter Noble Burns Art Courtesy True West Archives

Yellowstone Prevails!

BY CANDY MOULTON

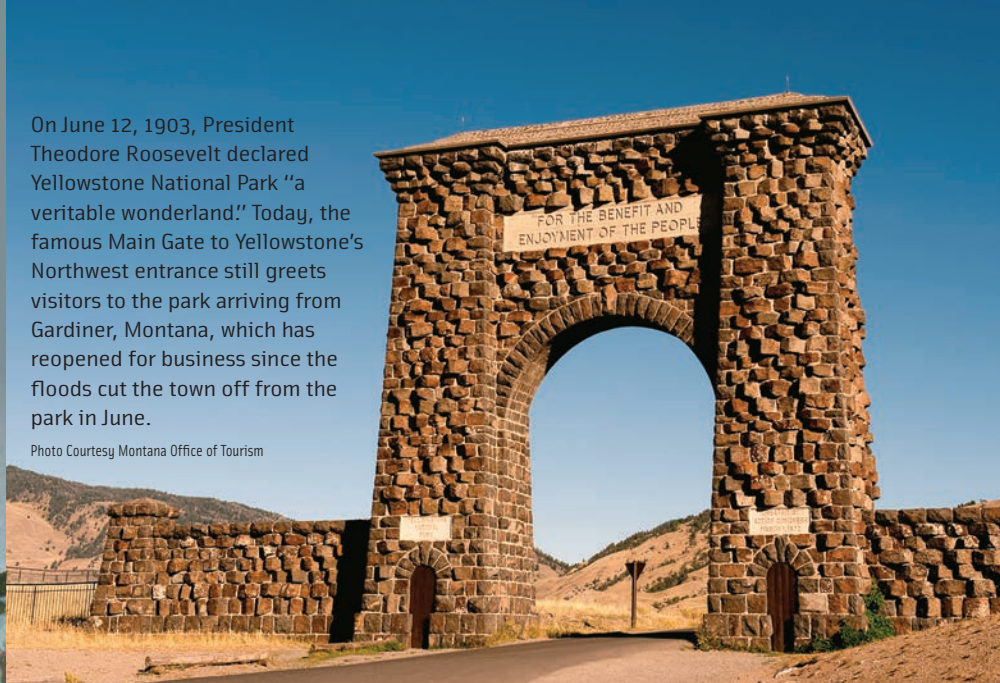


Artist Thomas Moran accompanied the Hayden Survey of Yellowstone in 1871–72. Moran's artwork of the region's natural wonders, including the canyon of Yellowstone River, heavily influenced Congress and President Ulysses S. Grant to create the nation's and the world's first national park 150 years ago in 1872.

"Tower Falls and Sulphur Mountain, Yellowstone National Park," by Thomas Moran, Courtesy NYPL Digital Archives

On June 12, 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt declared Yellowstone National Park “a veritable wonderland!” Today, the famous Main Gate to Yellowstone’s Northwest entrance still greets visitors to the park arriving from Gardiner, Montana, which has reopened for business since the floods cut the town off from the park in June.

Photo Courtesy Montana Office of Tourism



In early June, Yellowstone National Park, which is celebrating its sesquicentennial year, was hit with heavy rain and fast snowmelt causing devastating flooding. The natural event wiped out roads and bridges, took houses and other structures off their foundations and floated them down rivers.

Campers and visitors were evacuated, and the park immediately shut down all entrances. It appeared that the park would be closed for weeks. But the National Park Service, under the direction of Yellowstone Superintendent Cam Jolley, showed that sometimes even the great federal bureaucracy can move quickly. Within days some roads were reopened, and just over a month later the entire park was open to some degree.

A lot of work needs to be done to recover from the flooding within the park and in nearby communities. One message came out loud and clear in the aftermath: The communities are resilient and open for business.

The flooding and closure caused tremendous harm, damaging businesses and closing many of them down during the peak summer tourist season—which they all rely on to make it through long winter months.

The hardest hit area within the park was the north section including the roads from the northeast entrance at Cooke City, Montana, to Mammoth. The park headquarters at Mammoth remained operational, but many visitor services were curtailed and only started reopening in late July. Temporary roads provided access between Mammoth and Gardiner; some other roads in the northern part of the park were so heavily damaged they could not be quickly reopened.

By late July the Beartooth Highway from Red Lodge to Cooke City, Montana, had been reopened. That high-elevation highway is nothing short of spectacular and worth driving just for the views. While Cooke City’s main tourist season is in the summer, the community does



Flooding initially hit the Red Lodge, Montana, area particularly hard, but the historic gateway city to the scenic Beartooth Highway is back and open for business.

Courtesy Montana Office of Tourism



Mammoth Hot Springs near the northwest entrance of Yellowstone National Park near Gardiner, Montana, is still one of the most photographed and visited natural wonders in the park.



Visitors to Yellowstone National Park will still be able to see its magnificent American bison herd but upon entering the park they should check with the park rangers on current locations, road and safety regulations.

Courtesy Montana Office of Tourism

remain open during winter and is a place to visit if you like winter sports like snowmobiling. Because the Bear-tooth Highway closes when snow hits the area, the access to Cooke City during winter is through the Sunlight Basin and over the Chief Joseph Scenic Highway. This is another stunning drive to make as you travel to Cody, Wyoming.

Red Lodge is Open

In June floodwaters tore through downtown Red Lodge and damaged structures, but there are many reasons to visit, including the chance to stay at the Pollard Hotel or visit the Carbon County Historical Society and Museum. Other attractions include the Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary and art galleries. In the summer visitors can take a ride in one of the iconic Yellowstone buses (which aren't your standard buses!) or hike nearby trails. Red Lodge is a good winter destination, too, with Nordic ski trails and downhill skiing on Red Lodge Mountain.

Flooding really took a toll in Fromberg, Montana, located along the Clark Fork

River. Volunteers from surrounding areas and even other states came to this small town of around 400 residents to help with the cleanup and rebuilding efforts. Despite the setbacks, there is plenty to do in Fromberg including visiting the Clarks Fork Valley Museum, which is housed in a railroad depot but has other structures including a homesteader's cabin and one-room doctor's office.

Don't Miss: Columbus and Livingston, Montana

Columbus, Montana, at the confluence of the Stillwater and Yellowstone rivers, also faced flooding. If you visit, take the time to see the Museum of the Beartooths with exhibits about the Apsáalooke (Crow) Indians, the railroad, early settlers and local businesses. A trip to Columbus is not complete without stopping at the New Atlas Bar, which opened in 1916 and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

From Columbus head west along the Yellowstone River to Livingston. When Lewis and Clark returned from the

Pacific Northwest and Fort Clatsop in the summer of 1806, they split their party in western Montana. Clark, with several men plus Sacajawea and Toussaint Charbonneau and their son Jean Baptiste, eventually traveled across southern and eastern Montana, following the Yellowstone River back to its confluence with the Missouri River. The route took them through the area where Livingston is now located. Learn more about their journey in this region at the Yellowstone Gateway Museum. This facility, in a 1906 schoolhouse, also interprets other transportation history—like the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railroad.

The Livingston Depot Center, located in the Northern Pacific's railroad depot that was built in 1902 and which served as an important point for travelers headed into Yellowstone National Park, hosts exhibits, art exhibits and events for all ages. Livingston is still a gateway to Yellowstone, reached by driving through the beautiful Paradise Valley. To the south is Chico Hot Springs, which has a swim-up bar, an eclectic selection of lodging options and good dining.



GOOD GRUB AND LODGING

The Pollard Hotel, Red Lodge, MT; **Whiskey Creek Saloon**, Livingston, MT; **Chico Hot Springs**, Pray, MT; **Three Bear Lodge**, West Yellowstone, MT; **The Wort Hotel**, Jackson, WY; **The Irma Hotel**, Cody, WY

Buffalo Bill's Historic Irma Hotel in Cody, Wyoming, is a great place to call home for a long weekend or more while exploring the city, visiting its museums—including the Buffalo Bill Center of the West—traveling the countryside and going to Yellowstone National Park via the park's East Entrance.

Courtesy Wyoming Office of Tourism



Gardiner, Montana: Open for Business

Gardiner is Montana's true gateway to Yellowstone National Park, and this small town felt the effects of the Yellowstone region flooding in June as the raging floodwater carved the riverbank, causing houses to literally fall into the maelstrom and float away. For a few days the town was virtually cut off. But Gardiner is both tough and resilient. (It proved that a couple of years ago when a fire tore through the business district). This year, the flooding resulted in lodging properties and other businesses being cut off and closed temporarily, as many roads were damaged or completely obliterated. But as soon as access could be restored, the town began its rebound.

Plan a Visit: West Yellowstone and Jackson and Cody, Wyoming

While Yellowstone had reopened by late July, the access from the north end of the park was still restricted to Mammoth, with only essential employees allowed to travel one old road, which was once the stagecoach route. Work was underway to upgrade the roadway and improve conditions for the public. But that didn't mean it was impossible to get into Yellowstone from the northern entrance; private tour companies had some access to take visitors into the area, even though visitor services were still limited at Mammoth.

Driving northeast of Gardiner, Montana, along U.S. Highway 89, travelers will experience the beauty of Paradise Valley. Enjoy the scenic drive to Livingston, Montana, a great place to relax and explore the Yellowstone Valley, from Bozeman to Columbus.

Communities on the west side of Yellowstone, including West Yellowstone, the primary entrance to the park from western Montana and Idaho, were not hit by significant flooding, but they were affected as visitors changed their plans and entered the park through that entrance. Similarly, Jackson Hole, Grand Teton National Park and the town of Jackson, saw an influx of travelers. Those communities are always busy in the summer, as they have a variety of lodging and dining properties along with many things to do.

Tour operators in West Yellowstone maintained services into the park—including through the North Entrance at Gardiner. This is also the busiest park entrance during the winter with snowcoach and snowmobile tours operating from their base in West Yellowstone. Reservations are required for winter trips, but the chance to see Yellowstone when snow covers the landscape is certainly worth the effort to arrange such an excursion. While some of Yellowstone's wildlife hibernates or migrates out of the park during winter, other species are certainly around, including bison, river otters, coyotes, wolves, bald eagles and more.

Pahaska Teepee, located near the east gate entrance to Yellowstone, is Buffalo Bill's original 1904 lodge, and has a range of lodging options from small cabins to facilities suitable for large families or groups of friends. Hiking trails and

horseback excursions are popular with visitors to Pahaska. And along the North Fork of the Shoshone River—between Pahaska and Yellowstone's east gate and Cody—are a several other lodging properties.

Like Jackson Hole, Cody saw an influx of visitors in the immediate aftermath of the flooding because people were unable to get into Yellowstone. This small city can handle such a crowd, however, with its unparalleled attraction: the Buffalo Bill Center of the West. The five museums at the center appeal to various interests, from Western art and firearms to the story of Buffalo Bill Cody, natural history and Plains Indians.

Buffalo Bill's Irma Hotel is always a good bet when in Cody, but you can shoot Wild West-era firearms at the Cody Firearms Experience, walk through the historic buildings at Old Trail Town, or stroll along Sheridan Avenue for shopping and dining options.

Unfortunately, the sesquicentennial of America's oldest national park was not quite what everybody expected. The flood that hit the region, which has been called a 500-year event, proved that nature is unpredictable, but it's also resilient. Plan your own trip to the park or one of the nearby communities and help with the rebound.



Candy Moulton has eaten, stayed, hiked, snowmobiled, camped and horsepacked throughout the Yellowstone region.

BY KELLEN CUTSFORTH

CANNIBAL

CORRESPONDENCE

THE MOST CELEBRATED
COLORADO CONVICT
WAS WOODED AND
LOVED—DESPITE HIS
LIFE SENTENCE FOR
EATING HIS CAMPING
COMPADRES.

Why do some women become infatuated with heinous serial killers and mass murderers confined in jail cells? Why, in some unusual cases, do they go so far as to open communications with these men? Mental health

professionals refer to this disorder as *hybristophilia*. In popular culture, the ailment is referred to as *Bonnie and Clyde syndrome*. The condition is usually characterized by a woman who will communicate with a high-profile criminal to try and kindle a relationship with them.

This syndrome is not solely a 20th-century phenomenon. In fact, the most notorious cannibal of the Old West, Alfred Packer (or Alferd, depending on which spelling you accept), received “fan mail” from several adoring women while he was incarcerated for his crimes.

Packer is infamous for committing cannibalism during the winter of 1874 after guiding a group of five men into Colorado Territory’s San Juan Mountains during a horrendous snowstorm. After arriving by himself at the nearby Los Pinos Indian Agency, Packer spun a story about his comrades having left him while they searched for food. He stuck to this tale, saying he was unaware of what happened to his companions, even though he carried large sums of their money and possessed a rifle known to have belonged to one of the men.

Packer’s flimsy account was questioned by those who knew him, and he was soon arrested. Under interrogation, he admitted



Alfred Packer, who remains one of the country’s most infamous cannibals, led a strange and almost lurid life—even during his time in prison and to the end of his days.

Courtesy True West Archives

to partaking in cannibalism. However, he denied committing murder. Following Alfred’s incarceration, the mutilated bodies of his five companions were discovered, and most historians conclude that the remains were found near the Gunnison River by an illustrator for *Harper’s Weekly*, who was on assignment in the area. The corpses showed signs of intense violence with fractures of the skulls consistent with blows delivered by a hatchet. Following this discovery, Packer escaped from jail and went on the lam for nearly 10 years until March 1883, when he was discovered in Douglas, Wyoming, living under the alias “John Swartz.”

After this arrest, Packer was put on trial, convicted of murder, and sentenced to death for killing “some [five] other persons for their money and a vicious desire for human flesh and blood.” During sentencing the judge famously uttered the words, “I sentence you, Alfred Packer, to be hanged by the neck until you are dead, dead, dead.” However, Alfred would escape death on a technicality and receive a second trial. At the outcome of that trial, Packer was convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to a 40-year prison term in the Colorado State Penitentiary in Cañon City. Throughout his incarceration, Packer maintained his innocence, saying he only acted in self-defense when attacked.

Perhaps the most prominent woman to champion Packer’s cause while he was in prison was the popular journalist known by the pen name “Polly Pry.” Supposedly, Polly, whose real name was Leonel Campbell Ross O’Byrne, received her nickname from fellow reporters because they said she had the

ability to “pry” information out of anyone. Pry first met Packer and interviewed him while researching an article about Colorado’s prison system, focusing on the Colorado State Penitentiary.

Polly, who was also the first female reporter for the *Denver Post*, believed Packer to be innocent of murder. She used her column to argue that “since sailors were legally allowed to eat people if they were lost at sea, the same rules should apply to people stranded in the mountains.”

Through the popularity of her Packer column that brought increased revenue and readership, Polly persuaded the owner of the *Post*, Harry Tammen, to pay for Packer’s defense and demand a retrial. The retrial eventually led to a pardon for Packer on January 7, 1901.

But before Polly Pry helped secure his eventual release, Packer received “a constant stream of the curious” who came to ogle “Colorado’s Nationally Known Prisoner.”

Along with the influx of onlookers coming to his prison cell, Packer began receiving loads of letters from adoring well-wishers. One of these sympathizers was Mrs. Rebecca A. Newman. Born in 1846 in Herkimer, New York, Newman worked as a schoolteacher while residing in the Bronx neighborhood of New York City. By opening communications with Packer, she apparently hoped to form a friendship with him and express her sympathy for his circumstances.



Leone! Campbell Ross O’Bryan, professionally known under the pen name “Polly Pry,” was a reporter for the *Denver Post*. She became an advocate of Packer’s and eventually helped him win his release from prison. This image was taken around 1885.

Courtesy Denver Public Library Special Collections, Z-337

When Colorado’s Governor-Elect Alva Adams learned of Newman’s affections he warned her, writing, “If you knew Packer—knew his career and was acquainted with all of the details and surroundings of his horrible crime that you would not care to be his defender and to offer excuses for his conduct.” Not dissuaded by Adams’ alarm, Newman insisted communications be opened anyway. In 1887, he relented and forwarded her letter to the State Penitentiary.

Disturbingly, Rebecca implored Packer to delve deeply into his crimes and give, “a full detailed statement of the whole circumstances connected with [your] most extraordinary trials and sufferings.” Alfred, unsurprisingly, was willing to comply. Detailing his account to Newman, Packer stuck to his story of self-defense and only committing cannibalism for survival. However, he did divulge several interesting details about his ordeal.

Before the deaths of his five companions, in November of 1873, Packer lied to those men and 15 other miners near Bingham Canyon, Utah Territory, telling them he had the ability to guide them to Colorado Territory’s rich precious metal region. Because of his ineptitude, Packer caused the men to slog through the San Juan Mountains for nearly two months, only covering 250 miles at a meager average of three miles a day.

After wandering in the wilderness, the beleaguered party were eventually discovered by warpainted Ute Indians. Among the Ute braves was Chief Ouray, who took them to a spot near his village where they set up a makeshift camp. Known as “The White Man’s Friend,” Ouray exchanged food and supplies with the travelers while advising them to shelter at their encampment until the winter passed.

However, a contingent of five men—George Noon, Shannon Wilson Bell, James Humphrey, Frank Miller and the elderly



The Remains of Packer's Party Found Near the Gunnison River. This illustration appeared in Harper's Weekly on October 17, 1874.

Courtesy Denver Public Library Special Collections, Z-4070

"Cannibal Plateau" marks the spot in the San Juan Mountains where Packer's party became lost in the snow. There is a memorial placed there for the men Packer cannibalized.

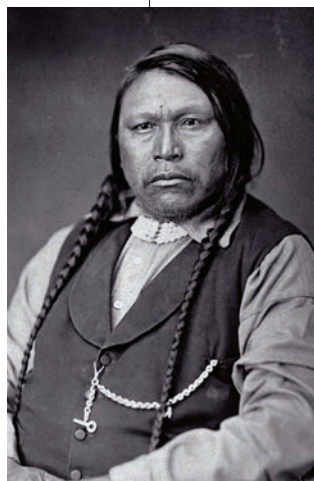
Courtesy Denver Public Library Special Collections, X-60

Israel Swan—wanted to reach Breckenridge before thousands of fortune hunters descended on the area. These men would be the five who, on February 9, 1874, foolishly followed Packer into the maw of a ferocious storm. The hope of this contingent was to reach the Los Pinos Indian Agency, the closest outpost to Ouray's camp, and from there head to Breckenridge.

Addressing these events in his correspondence, Packer attempted to deflect blame for leading his comrades to their doom by throwing Ouray under the wagon's wheels. He wrote, "From conversations with the Indian Chief, the noted Ouray, we learned that in his opinion we could reach the Los Pinos Agency in not over 5 days on foot across the mountains. I had never been at the Agency and was only guided by general reputation and information rec'd from Ouray."

Packer was a known pathological liar, and the account he gave to Newman concerning Ouray is not entirely truthful. Ouray never told Packer that they were only five days from the Los Pinos Agency because there was at least three to four feet of snow blocking their path.

In fact, the prospectors who remained at the camp stated, "[Ouray] told them...they would all die, and that he had not an Indian in the



In 1874, Chief Ouray warned Packer and his traveling companions not to venture into the raging storm in Colorado's San Juan Mountains. They did not heed the Ute's warning, and the party eventually became snowbound.

Courtesy Denver Public Library Special Collections, Z-183

band that would go to show the route...as they were afraid of the deep snow."

However, when Ouray realized Packer's party was still going to stupidly stagger into

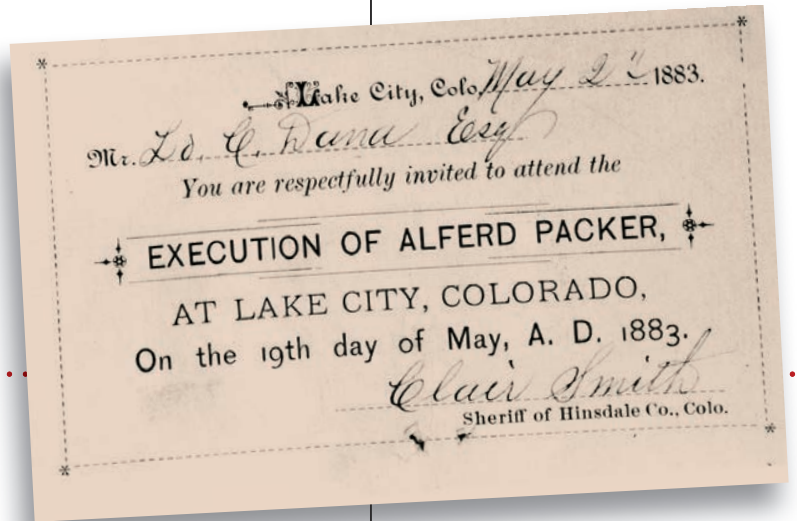
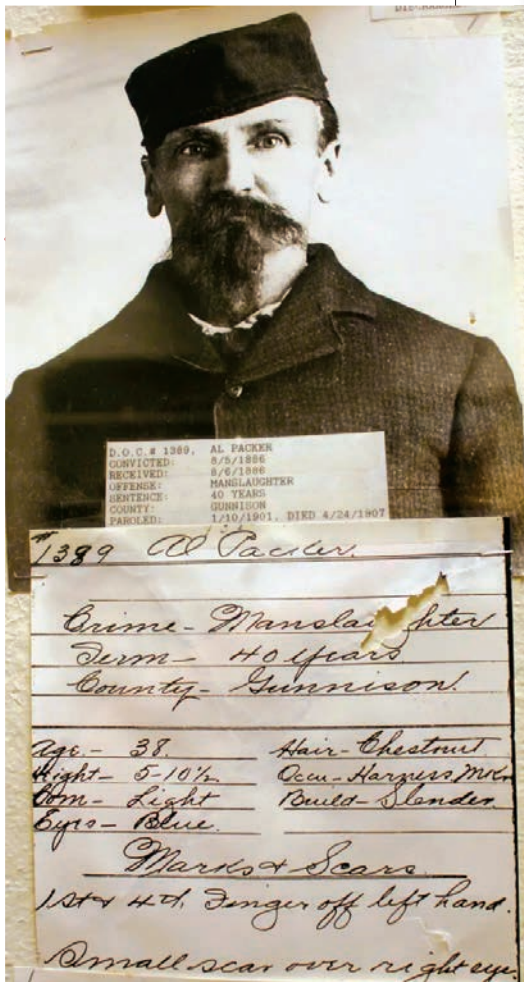
the storm, he graciously provided them with provisions. Alfred wrote that they were given, "scanty fare... about 20 lbs of flour and not over 10 lbs of good meat." Ouray also drew a crude map on the ground with a stick giving them, "all the directions he could as a route." Somehow, these men still did not grasp the desperation of their circumstances and trudged on.

Not surprisingly, Packer told Newman, "At the end of 9 days the last provisions had been eaten. We ate our goatskin moccasins and subsisted on rosebuds until we were weakened and emaciated and mentally completely distracted." Those conditions clearly led to the deaths and cannibalization of all in Packer's party.

Alfred also attempted to downplay going on the run for a decade, telling Newman, "I

This photo of Packer shows his almost chameleon-like ability to change his appearance and look like a totally different person.

Courtesy True West Archives



was not arrested or even censured by any one until 1883 when I was arrested. Though I was in the country and seen by all men during all the time." This is also a ridiculous statement considering Packer was living in a different territory and under an alias for the very reason of evading capture.

While in prison, Packer often crafted leather belts, bridles, wooden canes and watch fobs fashioned from dyed and braided horsehair. He normally sold these items as souvenirs to the gaping gawkers visiting him. However, he would occasionally gift one of these items to people he thought were special. He gave a chain bracelet to Rebecca as a sign of his affection and desire for a relationship. Like most manipulative criminals, however, Alfred clearly had hidden intent. Through his correspondence with Newman, he hoped to find out what she could do for him. Packer wrote, "[I will make] you proof I am worthy of the aid of the philanthropic and those better situated than I am financially and otherwise."

Newman died in 1926 at the age of 80. Packer died alone in

1907 in Littleton, Colorado, a suburb of Denver at the age of 69. Whether Newman and Packer ever met is lost to history, but women like Newman still exist today. They play a dangerous game when contacting famous criminals who are experienced

Invitations to Alfred Packer's execution were sent to upstanding community members in 1883. However, they were unable to use their invites, as the execution never took place and Packer was eventually paroled.

Courtesy Denver Public Library Special Collections, C Photo Collection 516



Buried in Littleton, Colorado, Packer was interred with full military honors. It is said he became a vegetarian later in life.

Courtesy Denver Public Library Special Collections, C Photo Collection 516

manipulators. And, for those who do not proceed with caution, sometimes end up being eaten alive.

Kellen Cutsforth is a ghostwriter and author who has published numerous books and articles on the American West. His titles include *Buffalo Bill*, *Boozers*, *Brothels and Bare-Knuckle Brawlers*, the co-authored *Old West Showdown*, and its sequel *Standoff and High Noon*.



A cold complex of two- and three-story brick and stone buildings with arched windows, the Colorado State Penitentiary at Cañon City counted Packer as an inmate until his release on February 8, 1901.

Courtesy Denver Public Library Special Collections, X-7801

TRUE WEST
EXCLUSIVE

CLASSIC GUNFIGHTS

¿QUIEN ES, PETE?

BILLY THE KID VS PAT GARRETT

BAD MOON RISING



The Midnight Men

Convinced the Kid may still be around Fort Sumner, Pat Garrett leaves Roswell at night accompanied by John W. Poe (who has replaced Frank Stewart as Panhandle Stock Association detective) and “Kip” McKinney. They ride at night and stay off the main roads.

Illustrations by Bob Boze Bell

BY BOB BOZE BELL

Based on the research of Fred Nolan, Robert Utley, Mark Lee Gardner, Leon Metz, Nora Henn, Bob Hart, Mike Pitel, Chuck Usmar, Jim Earle, Roy Young, Maurice Fulton, Philip Rasch and Lynda Sanchez.

JULY 14, 1881

Rising at dawn, Garrett, Poe and McKinney ride “up into the hills” and scan the landscape with field-glasses. After an hour or two, Garrett sends Poe into Sumner “to take observations” and arranges to meet him four miles north of Fort Sumner.

Poe noses around the plaza and gleans no news of the Kid’s whereabouts (although he later claims “there was a very tense situation in Fort Sumner that day, as the Kid was at that very time hiding in one of the native’s houses there”). He then rides on to Sunnyside, seven miles above Sumner, to interview Postmaster Milnor Rudolph. It was Rudolph’s son Charles who rode in the posse at Stinking Spring. Rudolph admits he has heard rumors of the Kid’s presence but doesn’t believe them. When Poe questions him further, Rudolph becomes “nervous and evasive.”

Poe leaves Sunnyside after dark and meets up with Garrett and McKinney at the proposed meeting place. The three decide to slip into Fort Sumner in the darkness and see what they can find. At about nine p.m. Sheriff Pat Garrett and two deputies, John Poe and Tom “Kip” McKinney, ensconce themselves within a peach orchard on the northern boundary of Fort Sumner. A full moon looms above.

As the lawmen creep toward the buildings, they hear voices. Stopping, they realize someone else is in the orchard. “Soon a man arose from the ground,” Garrett later remembers, “in full view, but too far away to recognize. He wore a broad-brimmed hat, a dark vest and pants, and was in his shirt sleeves.”

The dark figure says something (indiscernible to the officers), jumps the fence and walks into the compound. (Garrett later learns that this was Billy the Kid; the inference is that Billy had just finished making love in the green grass.)

By now it is nearly midnight. Garrett and his deputies back out of the orchard and approach Pete Maxwell’s

house. The three men slip silently onto Maxwell’s south porch.

Garrett posts his two deputies at the front gate and goes inside. Poe sits on the edge of the steps in the open gate, and McKinney squats just outside.

A full moon lights up the Cottonwood trees along the Pecos River as a dark figure slips into the side yard of a long, low adobe. Once inside, he goes straight to her bedroom at the southeast corner. Opening the door just a crack, he sees the love of his life. He has risked everything for her, and she is as beautiful as he has remembered. As he quietly slips inside and starts to undress, he suddenly senses something moving out the window, on the parade ground. He freezes and instinctively ducks down to the floor and inches forward to the front window. As he carefully peers out, he spies two strangers crouched and conversing at the front gate. Staying low, he moves like a cat back across the room and out into the darkened hallway. He quietly slips into the corner bedroom across the hall.

¿“*Quien es?* ¿*Quien es?*, Pete”? (Who is it? Who is it, Pete?)

There is no answer, but he senses someone besides Pete is also in the room. One more time he whispers, ¿“*Quien es?*”?

There is a loud explosion, and it’s the last thing he remembers before the darkness takes him.



Stocking Feet Don't Lie

Essentially, Sheriff Pat Garrett caught Billy the Kid with his pants down in a darkened bedroom. After the shooting, all the principals agreed on one thing: an explanation needed to be fashioned that would get Billy out of the house, but it needed to include him being in his stocking feet. Why they didn't just lie about this part as well is kind of mystifying, but it was, after all, a Victorian time, and the proper thing to do was to protect Pete's little sister (Paulita was 15!) from scandal. And so all of the ridiculous and strained details about walking across the parade ground in his stocking feet to get meat, was made up to protect the Maxwell name.



In the "official" telling of the events leading up to the death of the Kid, deputies Poe and McKinney claim they noticed a lone figure approaching on the inside of the fence. He is hatless and in his stocking feet. And, most tellingly, he's buttoning his pants. I don't believe this, and I'm convinced it didn't happen.

The Maxwell House

John Poe describes Pete Maxwell's dwelling as being a "very long, one-story" building, consistent with many military post buildings at the time Pete's father, Lucien, bought the property in 1870. Gregory Scott Smith, manager at the Fort Sumner Historic Site, found the 1863 U.S. Army floor plan in the National Archives. It shows the original layout of the officers' quarters, one of which became the Maxwell house. With no doors on the outside of the Maxwell bedroom, this floor plan could change how we view the Kid's final movements.

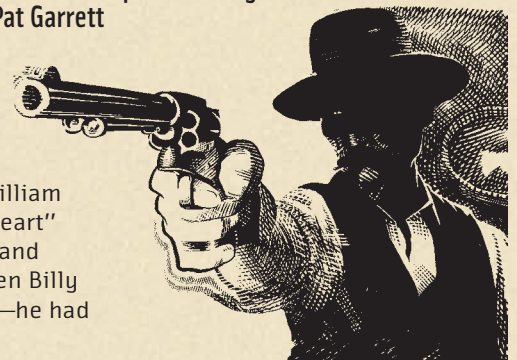
Mess Hall



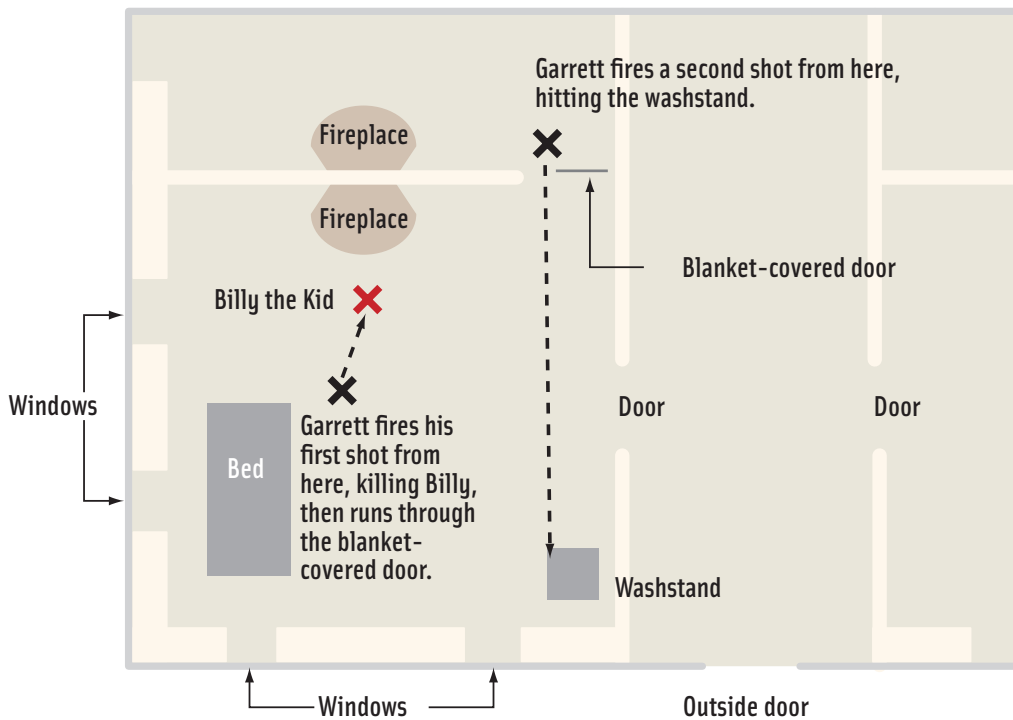
Fence

Gate where John Poe and "Kip" McKinney were posted by Pat Garrett

Kip McKinney confided to a mining partner named Frederick William Gray that Garrett knew the Kid would visit his "Mexican sweetheart" and that the lawmen arrived at the Maxwell house before Billy and "tied and gagged" the girl. Garrett hid behind the sofa and when Billy showed, Pat shot him down. The Kid's worst fear had come true—he had been shot down like a dog.



10 feet

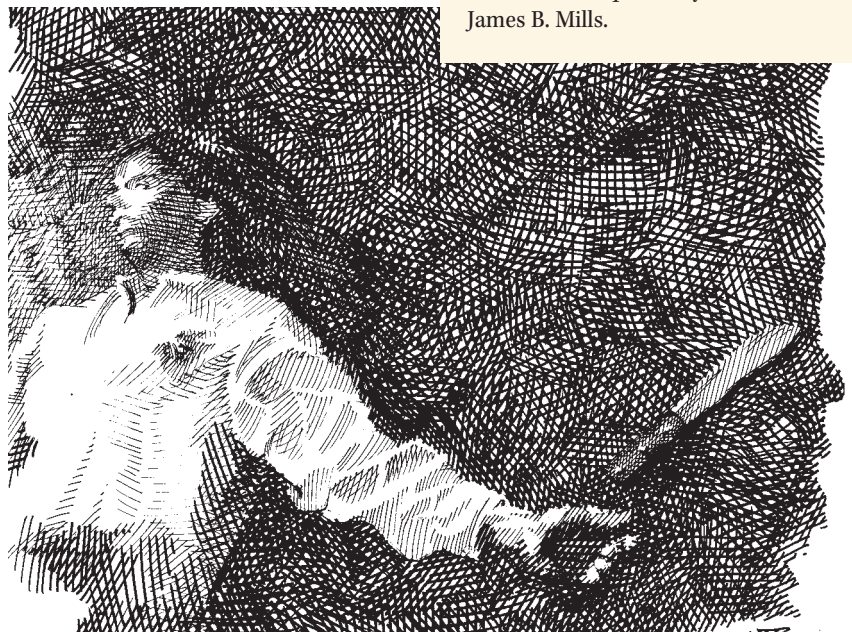


**" I am not afraid to die like a man fighting,
but I would not like to be killed
like a dog unarmed."**

—Billy the Kid



Garrett claimed the Kid came in on him and was armed with a pistol and a knife. In my opinion, the Kid was unarmed and his worst-case scenario had come true: he was shot down like a dog.



Aftermath: Odds & Ends

Jesús Silva and several local women ask permission to move Billy's body to the old carpenter shop on the eastern side of the fort and they laid him on a workbench (see page 19). The Kid's fatal wound was plugged with a rag, while the Hispano women washed and cleaned the Kid's body for the wake. Candles were soon lit and placed around his corpse.

News spread about the killing and soon enough almost everyone in the immediate vicinity showed up. On the morning of July 15, a coffin was constructed by Jesús Silva with help from Vicente Otero and a few others. Pete Maxwell chipped in \$25 to buy Billy some new clothes. A beige suit, shirt, undergarments and a pair of "stockings" were purchased, and the outlaw was dressed out for burial. Once in the casket, the Kid was moved to Beaver Smith's saloon where it remained on display until the grave was dug and he was transported to his final resting place in the Fort Sumner cemetery.

Recommended: *The Illustrated Life & Times of Billy the Kid, Volume III and Final Word* by Bob Boze Bell, and *Billy the Kid: El Bandido Simpático* by James B. Mills.



"Practically every man, woman and child in town followed the body to the little cemetery," remembered Paulita Maxwell. A sermon in Spanish followed. Although there was no church in Fort Sumner, I have portrayed the essence of the ceremony as it relates to all of New Mexico. The Kid today is the patron saint of Lincoln County.

1867, 90



CLASSIC TRUE WEST

FROM THE TRUE WEST ARCHIVES

Editor's Note: Emmy award-winning journalist, Arizona Women's Hall of Fame inductee and *True West's* "Old West Saviors" columnist Jana Bommersbach is well-known for her writing and research on Western women, including her profile of Cattle Kate, which appeared in the July 2005 issue. She is currently working with Bob Boze Bell on a new book about the real women of the West. To read more of Bommersbach's columns and articles, go to TrueWestMagazine.com and subscribe for full access to more than 69 years' worth of exciting issues of *True West*.

BY JANA BOMMERSBACH

SO-CALLED CATTLE KATE RISES FROM RUBBISH

Evidence points toward Ella Watson's innocence.

Cattle Kate was the only woman ever hanged in Wyoming for cattle rustling, and history long portrayed the act as "good riddance to bad rubbish."

Powder River War historian Helen Huntington Smith wrote that Ellen "Ella" Watson's lynching was "the most revolting crime in the entire annals of the West."

Uncovered evidence strongly supports Ella's ownership of the cattle she was accused of stealing, while stories about her being a loose and wild woman were clearly concocted by her killers. On top of that, authorities never brought the accused killers to trial because the witnesses mysteriously died or disappeared before they could tell the court what they'd seen.

And on a sunny Saturday in 1889, it's believed that powerful Wyoming ranchers murdered Watson because she had gotten in their way.

Ella's dream

Ella was born in Canada on July 2, 1861, the oldest of 10 children. Her family moved to Kansas, where she married at 18 to a man who abused her. After her divorce, she went to Denver, Colorado, then Cheyenne, Wyoming, and finally to Rawlins, where she worked as a cook and domestic for two years at the Rawlins House. Some erroneously thought this was a brothel and labeled her a prostitute, confusing Ella with a known prostitute of the time who had the same name.

It was at Rawlins House in February 1866 that Ella met James Averell, a widower with a homestead claim in the Sweetwater River

Valley, where he'd established a road ranch and general store. The couple dreamed of marriage, but Ella also dreamed of owning her own homestead on adjoining land—one precluded the other, since the law only allowed one claim per family.

On May 11, the couple traveled 100 miles to Lander to obtain a marriage license, forever keeping their union secret to protect their plan to become large landowners.

In August, Ella filed a "squatter's claim" on 160 acres along Horse Creek, then built a two-room log cabin and dug irrigation ditches. The next month, Jim filed a claim for his irrigation ditch from the creek.

None of this sat well with their neighbors. Cattle baron Albert Bothwell irrigated a hay meadow from Horse Creek and ran cattle on nearby land—land he didn't own but was using anyway. He apparently hadn't anticipated anyone laying claim to the land—especially a woman—and wanted no restrictions on the precious water from the creek. He repeatedly offered to buy Ella's claim, but the feisty woman wouldn't sell.

Ella was building a nest egg to buy cattle by selling dinners at Jim's roadhouse for 50 cents each and working in the general store. Her secret husband, meanwhile, was making extra income from his new job as the Sweetwater postmaster—a position of respect that added weight to his words. Jim began writing letters to the editor of the Casper newspaper, in which he called his neighbors "land sharks" and openly charged them with filing illegal land claims under the guise that they were "improving" the



The local newspapers that trumped up Ella Watson as Cattle Kate, a cattle rustler who was hanged in Wyoming in 1889, were undoubtedly influenced by their backers: the cattle industry.

— TRUE WEST ARCHIVES —

property when they were merely moving a portable cabin from one claim to another.

Brand marks trouble

Jim and Ella felt their neighbors' wrath when they each tried to get brands approved for their emerging herds. Without an approved brand from the commission controlled by the cattlemen, cattle were fair game for poachers. Ella's request was denied, while Jim received his fifth rejection since his first request in 1885.

Even without a brand, Ella started her herd. In the fall of 1888, she bought 28 head from a man driving the cattle from Nebraska to the Salt Lake area. Ella did not record a bill of sale—she claimed it was in a safe deposit box in a bank, but it was never found. Then on March 23, 1889, with her improvements and herd in place, she filed her official homestead claim—she and Jim now owned more than 320 acres. Soon after, she did an end-run around the brand commission, buying an existing brand from a nearby rancher. By July, she had 41 head of cattle wearing her "LU" brand.

On the morning of July 20, stock detective George Henderson rode through Ella's

pasture. He took the news of Ella's cattle brand to other members of the Stock Association, including Bothwell, who had been trying unsuccessfully for years to force Ella and Jim off land he considered "his pasture."

Bothwell had to know Ella had owned most of those cows for nearly a year, but he called his fellow cattlemen together; one verified the brands were new, and six men took the matter into their own hands. Joining Bothwell were Ernest McLean, Robert Galbraith, John Durbin, Robert Conner and Tom Sun. At Ella's ranch, Durbin reportedly was so angry that he started tearing down her fences and driving the cattle out, 14-year-old John DeCorey said.

About that time, Ella returned home from a nearby Shoshoni encampment, where she'd bought a pair of intricately beaded deerskin moccasins, reports Lori Van Pelt in the 2003 *Wild Women of the Old West*.

Ella was directed to get into Sun's wagon. DeCorey said she wanted to go into the house and change, but they would not let her. "Bothwell told her he would rope her and drag her if she did not get in."

From there, the group went to Jim's place, forcing Jim into the wagon. Having been alerted by the boy, cowboy Frank Buchanan rode after the lynch party. Buchanan saw Bothwell tie a rope around Jim's neck, while McLean tried to rope a kicking and screaming Ella, wrote Dorothy Gray in *Women of the West*.

Buchanan said he shot at the men—emptying his revolver twice—but faced returned gunfire from Winchester. He frantically rode to the ranch to tell what was happening and then fetched the sheriff.

The bodies were left to hang in the July heat for two and a half days. A reporter who described the scene said it was clear "both man and woman had fought for their lives until the last."

"No sooner was Ella Watson dead," wrote Gray, "than the stockmen started a press campaign in which she was transformed into 'Cattle Kate,' characterized as having not only rustled more cattle than any man in the West but as having been a prostitute, husband-poisoner, and hold-up artist."

Some of Ella's friends tried to set the record straight. DeCorey declared in a letter to the *Casper Weekly Mail* that the cattle were legally hers: "She bought them and paid her own money for them and had them in her possession ever since I had been with her," Van Pelt reports. Another man, John Fales, came forward to say he'd driven the purchased cattle to Jim's ranch.

Unsettling end

Yes, the ranchers were indicted, but they never went to trial. Although several witnesses had identified them, all either disappeared or died mysteriously. Jim's nephew died, possibly of poisoning, on the very day he was scheduled to testify. The cowboy was said to have wandered all over the country,

hiding and fearing for his life from the Wyoming ranchers; the young boy left town and never was heard from again.

Gray notes that this lynching was one of the opening skirmishes in Wyoming's notorious Johnson County War, pitting the stockholders against the rest of the citizens.

But some were clearly on the ranchers' side. Van Pelt notes that the local *Daily Sun* editorialized: "No one who knows the gentlemen implicated would believe that they would commit an act of this nature without ample justification and except under the pressure of direct necessity."

The court-appointed administrator for the estates of Ella and Jim filed suit against Albert Bothwell and John Durbin for the return of 41 head of cattle—the same cattle the men had claimed were stolen and used as the excuse for the lynching. The suit was never acted upon, Van Pelt reports.



When Ella and Jim's bodies were found, a local reporter described them as swinging side by side, "their arms touching each other, their tongues protruding and their faces swollen and discolored almost beyond recognition. Common cowboy lariats had been used, and both had died by strangulation, neither fallen over two feet!"

— COURTESY WYOMING STATE ARCHIVES —

Ella's land was sold at auction by her father but eventually ended up in Bothwell's hands. So did Jim's land. Bothwell is said to have moved his house onto Ella's claim.

As Van Pelt notes, the killers went on to live long and successful lives. The same year as the lynching, both Bothwell and Sun were elected to the executive committee of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, and Robert Galbraith was elected to the Wyoming Territorial Legislature.

On the 100th anniversary of Ella's death in 1989, her family held a reunion in Casper and openly discussed the event with historians. "Watson's relatives believe [Ella] was murdered by rough neighbors, cattlemen so enraged by the fact that she and James Averell homesteaded in the middle of prime pasture near a creek with a good supply of water that the stock owners resorted to their own deadly solution," Van Pelt notes.

But that view angers some of the ancestors of the men who conducted the lynching, she adds. From her research, Van Pelt says Ella Watson "cannot conclusively be proven innocent or guilty of the crimes she was accused of in the summer of 1889."

But others say the evidence stacks up nicely in her corner—revealing that a 28-year-old woman who was murdered has been unjustly maligned all these years.



After many years of research on the life of Ella Watson, Jana Bommersbach published *Cattle Kate: A Novel* (Poisoned Pen Press) in 2014. She is currently writing *Real Women of the West* with Bob Boze Bell.

TRUE WEST ARCHIVES

For the first time ever, every issue of *True West* magazine is now online, including Jana Bommersbach's original, unabridged article as it appeared in the July 2005 issue.

To learn more about how you can read all of Bommersbach's articles and subscribe to *True West* Archives, go to TrueWestMagazine.com.

Our past awaits you!

BY CANDY MOULTON

California's Golden Trail

A tour of the historic transcontinental route reaps great experiences for heritage travelers.



The Kearney Arch Museum bridges Interstate 80 near Kearney, Nebraska. Here, visitors will receive a great introduction to the history of the Great Plains and the historic emigrant trails that cross the state.

Courtesy Nebraska Tourism

When the Mormon Battalion ended a nearly 2,000-mile march from the Missouri River to Santa Fe to enter the small settlement at San Diego on January 28, 1847, they were not even close to near the end of their travels through the West. Their involvement with the Mexican America War, as a part of the Army of the West led by Stephen Watts Kearny, had established the Southwest as part of America, and now in Alta California, they would be involved in key events that would really put California on the map.

Some members of the Mormon Battalion, once released from their duty, started heading north and east. They intended to join their families, whom they had left at the Missouri River at

Winter Quarters—Florence, Nebraska—the previous year. That spring of 1847, Brigham Young and a vanguard group of Mormons set off from their winter camping place, forging what would become the Mormon Pioneer Trail. They reached the Great Salt Lake Valley by late July and established a new home base. The Pioneer Company was followed by their families.

A year earlier, a wagon train had traveled west to Fort Bridger, and there decided to follow a guidebook written by Lansford Hastings. They were headed to California as well and would take a shortcut across the Wasatch, and then the Great Salt Lake desert before crossing Nevada and the rugged mountain range of the Sierra Nevada. Led by George Donner and Jacob Reed, this group made some serious miscalculations

in their travel (not to mention the fact that some of their wagons were ridiculously heavy and they spent much of their time arguing among themselves). The Donner Party reached the eastern foot of the mountains later than expected and became stranded by winter storms. Their error in travel was deadly for most of the party; some survived but only after enduring horrendous conditions— even to the point of eating each other in one of the best documented episodes of cannibalism in American history.

During the summer of 1847 there was little travel along the trail to California, but some members of the Mormon Battalion who had left San Diego to head toward their families stopped along the American Fork River. They were at the mill operated by John Marshall



For thousands of miners and emigrants who made it across the country on the California Trail, the bonanza was not in the streams but in the bounty of the Golden State's fertile lands.

Courtesy Carol Highsmith Archives, Library of Congress

when the first gold nuggets were found in January 1848, heralding what would become the California Gold Rush. A flood of gold seekers took to the California Trail in 1849, and the West would never be the same.

Fort Kearny, located just south of the Platte River and the city of Kearney, Nebraska, became the first key provision point on the California Trail west of such jump-off locations as Nebraska City, Brownsville, and even Florence/Winter Quarters. This site is now a Nebraska State Park. The story of overland travel comes to life as visitors walk over Interstate 80 in Kearny at the Archway Monument. Entering the center at ground level, visitors take an escalator up to the arch and then literally stroll along through the history of the trail.

For a chance to step in the trail of the pioneers who went to California (and other points west), travel west through Brule, Nebraska, to California Hill, and see the trail ruts and swales as they descend into Ash Hollow. Travelers on the trail in 1847 remarked on the "valley of monuments," including sandstone outcroppings Jail Rocks,

Courthouse Rock and Chimney Rock. The latter is on private land today, but the nearby Chimney Rock Historic Site has great views, and good interpretive exhibits that talk about the trails through this North Platte River valley in Western Nebraska.

From Chimney Rock continue west for a stop at Scotts Bluff National Monument, where hiking trails are right in the swales left by the wagons of the 19th century.

Farther west, a fur trade outpost was established along the river and was another important supply post, a well-established location for wagon travelers to rest, resupply and regroup. It was replaced in the 1840s with Fort Laramie, which became a U.S. military post in 1849. This National Historic Site has original and replica structures representing that era and, better yet, it is in a setting little changed over the decades.

The travelers headed to California followed the North Platte River to today's Casper, home of the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center. From the last crossing of the North Platte River, emigrants, argonauts and others



The Donner Party's tragic winter trapped in the Sierra Nevada over the winter of 1846-47 is commemorated at Donner Pass along Interstate 80 near Truckee, California.

Courtesy Carol M. Highsmith, Archives, Library of Congress

on the trail turned west. They would need to travel a couple of days with limited access to good water before they would reach the clean and steady supply of water in the Sweetwater River. Most camped for a day or two at Independence Rock, where many took the time to carve their names into the granite outcrop before they followed the meandering Sweetwater River past Devils Gate, Split Rock and on to South Pass.

Once they crossed the Continental Divide at South Pass, the travelers were in Oregon Country. While many like the Donner-Reed Party of 1846 headed south to Fort Bridger and then west across Utah and Nevada to California, other travelers took different routes west of the Divide, bypassing Fort Bridger by traveling farther north on the Sublette Cutoff. They would ultimately camp at the bottom of a location known as Big Hill, in today's Montpelier, Idaho, where the National Oregon-California Trail Interpretive Center gives visitors an immersive opportunity to explore trail history.

The travelers to California then continued west along the old Oregon Trail until they split off from the Raft River to angle their way past City of Rocks and into northeastern Nevada before turning



Summer travelers to the National Historic Trail Interpretive Center near Casper, Wyoming, will enjoy living history programs by reenactors encamped at the park. The musicians are Kim Merchant and his daughters Ana (left) and Rachel (center).

Courtesy BLM, Wyoming

Visitors to Chimney Rock National Monument enjoy wagon rides across the park in view of the famous geologic landmark on the Overland Trail.

Courtesy Nebraska Tourism



In one of my earlier articles this year, I wrote about the 150th anniversary of Yellowstone National Park. This year's anniversary will be remembered for that milestone, but more so for the devastating flooding that occurred on June 12-13. Around three inches of rain fell on high snowpack and the result was catastrophic with roads and bridges washed out, and extensive damage to buildings both in the park and in the small communities nearby, particularly in the northern area of Yellowstone. The park was immediately closed, though it was reopened for limited visitation, mainly in the southern areas. It will take months or perhaps years to repair all the damage. Of course, this changed plans for tens of thousands of people who wanted to celebrate the sesquicentennial of our nation's oldest park. Send a donation to the communities if you can but hold off on any plans to physically visit the park in the immediate future. Yellowstone will rejuvenate—it did after the 1988 fires— but it takes some time to heal nature's wounds.

—C.M.

west—following a route roughly the same as Interstate 80 today. The California Trail Interpretive Center, a few miles west of Elko, Nevada, has exhibits and live interpretive programs showing how challenging the trail could be across the desert-like landscape of the Great Basin.

For all travelers to California on the overland route, the crossing of the Sierra Nevada was the most significant and challenging area of the trail. The mountains were intimidating for those headed west and had been downright deadly for the Donner-Reed Party.

The end of the trail for most of the early travelers was somewhere along the American Fork River near today's

Coloma, California. They had risked their lives to make the journey, almost all with the hope that they would strike it rich in California's goldfields.

Many of the men of the Mormon Battalion who had been at Sutter's Mill when the first gold nuggets were picked up and identified, departed the gold camps and reunited with their families and friends in the Great Salt Lake Valley. They left the diggings to gold seekers, but the legacy they created in marching with the Army of the West, and their involvement in the early gold discoveries at Sutter's Mill, makes them true pioneers in California. ✕

Candy Moulton recently retired from her position as executive director of Western Writers of America, which means she now has even more time to visit the great museums of the American West.

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A WIDE SPOT IN THE ROAD



Rafting and kayaking on the American River is a popular activity near Placerville, California.

Photo by Maria Thi Mai, Courtesy BLM, California

Known as both Old Dry Diggins and Hangtown, Placerville is in the heart of northern California's gold country, and it was once the third largest city in California. But the early going was rough as the town wanted to be the county seat and had to vie with the rich diggings at nearby Coloma twice before the locals in Placerville

convinced state leaders that there had been a round of ballot box stuffing on the second county seat election. The evidence mounted, and in 1857 Placerville finally became the Eldorado County seat. Today the region is known not only for its gold country history, but for its vineyards and wines. You like pie? Head over to Hooverville Orchards.

GOOD EATS & SLEEPS

GOOD GRUB: Oregon Trail Wagon Train, Bayard, NE; San Pedro Mexican Restaurant, Torrington, WY; Firerock, Casper, WY; Ranch Hand Trail Stop, Montpelier, ID; The Star Hotel, Elk, NV
GOOD LODGING: Ramkota, Casper, WY; Hampton Inn, Elko, NV; Historic Cary House Hotel, Placerville, CA

A close-up, artistic shot of a rifle barrel. The words "GOLD BULLETS" are written in large, white, block letters across the barrel. The background is dark and textured, suggesting a forest or outdoor setting. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the barrel and the letters.

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BY SHERRY MONAHAN

Ancient Grains

From the arrival of Spanish missionaries to the present day, Arizona's climate has proved to be ideal for growing superior varieties of wheat, barley, smelt and oats.



In June 1903, a six-foot farmer proudly stood in his wheat field near Yuma, Arizona.

Courtesy Joseph B. Lippincott Papers, UC Riverside, Library, Water Resources Collection and Archives, California Digital Library

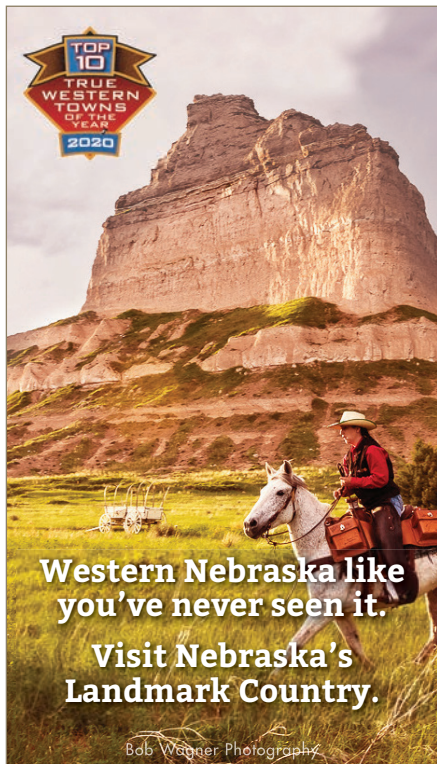
Arizona may have a dry and arid climate, but the pioneers grew a variety of crops, including fruits and grains. Grains were an important commodity during the 1800s and early 1900s. Pioneer grain farmers primarily grew White Sonora wheat, one of the varieties of white wheat in North America. It was carried over by the missionaries in the 1700s and became a very popular variety throughout the Southwest until the early 1900s. As railroads expanded in Arizona, newer varieties of wheat, like Turkey Red and Early Bart replaced the White Sonora, with some claiming its quality was inferior to others being grown in Kansas and Oklahoma.

In the 1870s, grain farmers struggled with keeping their grains from parching in the heat but managed with irrigation. In 1873 P.R. Brady in Florence, reported, "Business dull, mainly on account of poor demand from grain. Farmers all at work; ground dry, there having been no rain for several months past. Mr. B's flouring mill running steadily and making 4,300 lbs. superfine flour every twelve hours. Plenty of water in river for irrigating."

It was 1874 when Charles Trumbell Hayden realized there was a real opportunity in Tempe, so he built a mill near the modern corner of Mill Avenue and Rio Salado Parkway. His business was successful and flourished for over 120 years. In 1876 Hayden had a merchandise store in Prescott where he sold family, superfine, graham and cracked wheat flour.

In 1878 Phoenix's *Salt River Herald* reported that the land in Salt River Valley was prime agricultural land. It reported, "The soil is rich in alluvium, capable of producing, with good tillage, twenty to fifty bushels of wheat, barley and corn to the acre." Between 1880-81, Arizona had 10 flour mills that produced over 5,000,000 pounds of flour. In the 1880s, the grain farmers had to contend with fruit and flower growers, who wanted more land to expand their fields. Arizona was fast becoming a flower- and fruit-producing area. Many farmers felt the grain farmers' time had passed and that they needed to make way for flower and fruit growers. Both existed, and in the 1890s, Arizona grass and grain farmers were successfully producing alfalfa, barley, oats and wheat.

In 1900, those grains were being used in menus across Arizona. *The Arizona Republic* suggested a Thanksgiving menu that included cream of barley soup, toasted crackers, pies, whole wheat bread and doughnuts. Around the turn of the century newer varieties of wheat and barley were being planted. Hullless barley, spelt and Emmer grains were used for a variety of items including cereal. *The Holbrook Argus* had an ad for Salzer's Farm Seeds that read, "Salzer's Speltz (Emmer). Greatest cereal wonder of the age." We know spelt and Emmer as heirloom varieties today, but back in the day they were largely used for livestock feed. Emmer was also commonly called speltz, according to Prescott's *Weekly Journal-Miner*, but in 1912 *The*



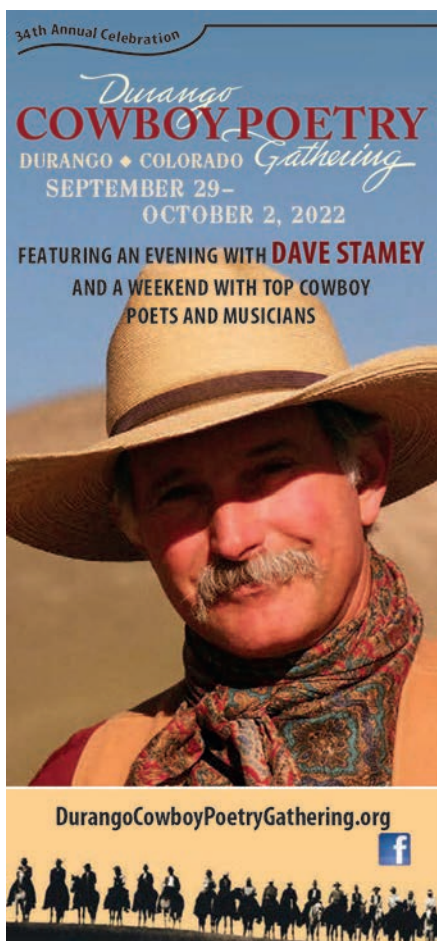
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Holbrook News disagreed and published a story titled, "New Grains of Hardy Merit." It began, "Speltz and emmer are really two distinct grains, and differ practically as much as the pear and the apple. Emmer is the German name...Speltz is a plant of similar appearance, but quite different."

In 1918, the Sossaman family homesteaded in Queen Creek and started growing grains and still do today. They've partnered with Hayden Flour Mills' new owner, Jeff Zimmerman, who mills their heritage grains into flours. They revived the name from the original Hayden family, who had the landmark mill in Tempe for over 100 years. When Zimmerman started the flour mill, he discovered a list of brands that were familiar to generations of Arizonans, including Arizona Rose, which can be seen on their packaging. Try making this pioneer recipe with Hayden Flour Mills heritage flour.



TEA ROLLS

- 5 cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups warm milk (100° to 110°)
- 1 package quick-rise yeast (about 2¼ teaspoons)
- ¼ cup butter, melted and cooled to room temperature
- 1 teaspoon salt • 1 large egg
- 3 tablespoons 1% lowfat milk

Combine 2 cups flour, warm milk and yeast in a large bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let stand 1½ hours.

Add 3 cups flour, butter, salt and egg. Stir for about three minutes or until well blended. Place dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead for about 8-10 minutes, until smooth and elastic. If the dough sticks to your hands, add a tablespoon of flour at a time until it feels tacky, but no longer sticks.

Place the dough in a large bowl coated with butter or cooking spray. Turn to coat the top. Cover and let rise in a warm place (85°) for about 1½ hours or until doubled in size.

Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and dust with enough flour so it's not sticky. Pat into an 8 x 10-inch rectangle and divide dough into 18 balls. Lightly grease a 13 x 9-inch baking pan and add the rolls.

Lightly coat the rolls with cooking spray and cover with plastic wrap. Let rise in a warm place (85°) for about 1½ hours or until doubled in size.

Bake at 375° for about 20 minutes or until browned. Cool rolls in pan 5 minutes. Serve warm, or cool on a wire rack.



Recipe adapted from Holbrook's *The Argus*, May 7, 1896.

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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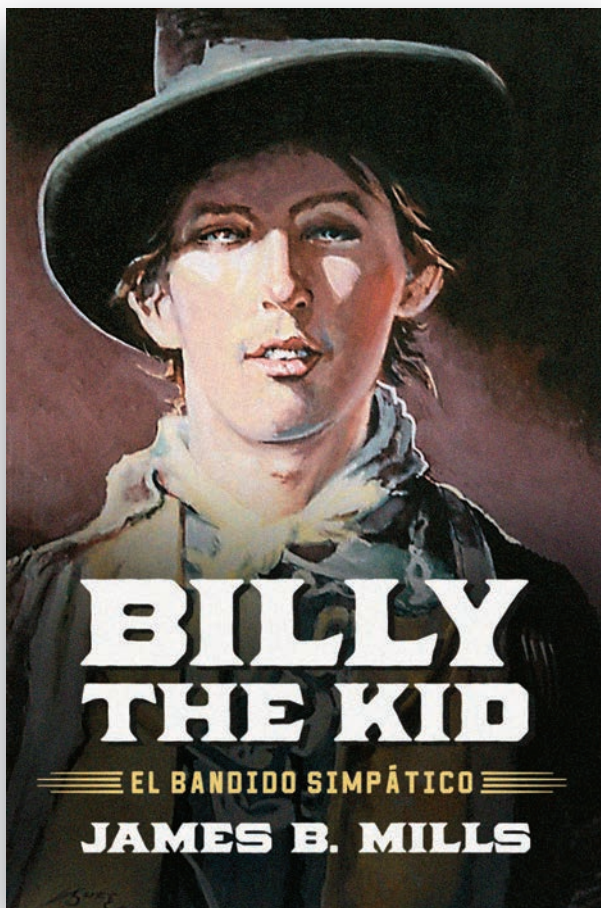
El Bandido Simpático

James B. Mills' major new biography of Billy the Kid, plus a geographic history of Nebraska, an alternate bio of The Kid, a Wild West Western, and an Apache adventure.

Give or take 8,300 miles between New Mexico, U.S.A., and New South Wales, Australia, and 140 years since the first book written about the exploits and last days of Billy the Kid, James B. Mills has brought forth the most ambitious biography of the legendary New Mexico outlaw ever written. Published by North Texas University Press, *Billy the Kid: El Bandido Simpático* (\$34.95) is a biography that places the real boy in the context of both his mythology, and his real, troubled life from his birth in an Irish neighborhood of Manhattan to his violent death in the Anglo-Hispano community of Fort Sumner.

Billy asks poignantly: “¿Quién es?” “Who is it?” “Who is he?” The question is at the foundation of Mills’ detailed research and well-expressed conclusions about Henry McCarty. The query is also what led the young historian to pen nearly 575 pages on the boy bandit, plus notes, bibliography and index. Without a doubt, Mills’ *Billy the Kid* will be the first resource scholars and researchers will reach for when asking questions about McCarty, law and order in the New Mexico Territory and the Lincoln County War.

I will never consider the question “¿Quién es?” as a singular question again—as Mills proves over and over—in his first book, I might add) that the question is not simply who is it, but who is *he*. This juxtaposition is particularly important for anyone attempting to separate the myth from the person, and Mills makes this case repeatedly in his search for the real flesh



and blood Henry McCarty versus the legendary and oft-interpreted William H. Bonney, aka Billy the Kid. He eloquently notes in his introduction: “The relentless quest to define just who this boy was—and he was a teenage boy for most of his exploits, as we sometimes forget—will continue. I merely hope to have brought us closer to the answer.”

What now for Billy the Kid historians, buffs and aficionados? Plenty, I believe, as Mills has raised the bar high for biographers of the legendary outlaw. Following in the footsteps of the best Western biographers of the Kid, including the recently passed Frederick Nolan and Robert M. Utley, Mills has provided readers with a

comprehensive synthesis of the previously published materials and original research with an ever-present emphasis on McCarty’s appreciation and amiable relationship with the local Hispano community of New Mexico. The Australian historian’s detailed research is shared in his extensive, annotated endnotes and inclusive bibliography. In addition to providing a roadmap to fellow scholars and researchers of his subject matter, he also provides a well-written historiography in his conclusion that places his biography within the previously published scholarship. Does Mills claim to have the last word on Henry McCarty, aka William H. Bonney? No, as Mills notes: “We relentlessly chase after him even more furiously than Pat Garrett did. Rarely does any historical figure so often cause as much debate and sometimes outright hostility amongst those who research and write about his life.”

I am eager to read Mills’ next work, *In the Days of Billy the Kid: The Frontier Lives of José Chávez y Chávez, Juan Patrón, Martín Chávez, and Yginio Salazar*, which I am sure will be written with the same vigor and style as *El Bandido Simpático*. And if you didn’t already know it, there is a new Kid on the block!

—Stuart Rosebrook

(Editor’s Note: To read an excerpt of Mills’ *Billy the Kid*, turn to page 18.)



Photo by Robert Ray

With COVID limiting national museum attendance and exhibition planning the past two years, museum managers and publishers of Western art and photography catalogues have produced fewer new exhibits and books.

Two major Western art books were published in 2021, and they should be revisited by lovers of the classic American art form:

Back-Tracking in Memory: The Life of Charles M. Russell, Artist—Recollections, Reflections and Personal Perspectives by Nancy Cooper Russell, edited by Thomas A. Petrie and Brian W. Dippie (C. M. Russell Museum, in association with Sweetgrass Books)

The American West Reimagined: Gems from the Coeur d'Alene Art Auction by Dr. Larry Len Peterson (Coeur d'Alene Art Auction, in association with Sweetgrass Books)

I also recommend to the Western art aficionado these five recent/upcoming exhibition catalogues and artist portfolios:

Cultural Convergence in New Mexico: Interactions in Art, History & Archaeology, Honoring William Wroth, edited by Robin Farwell Gavin and Donna Pierce, introduction by William Wroth (Museum of New Mexico Press)

Dakota Modern: The Art of Oscar Howe edited by Kathleen Ash-Milby and Bill Anthes (National Museum of the American Indian, University of Oklahoma Press)

Diego Rivera's America edited by James Oles (San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in association with University of California Press)

Ranchland: Wagonhound by Anouk Masson Krantz, foreword by Gretel Ehrlich (Images Publishing Group, ACC Art Books)

Speaking with Light: Contemporary Indigenous Photography edited by John Rohrbach and Will Wilson, introduction by Patricia Norby (Radius Books/Amon Carter Museum of American Art)

Biilaachia—White Swan: Crow Warrior, Custer Scout, American Artist by Rodney G. Thomas, foreword by Baa Hinnaché (McFarland)

—Stuart Rosebrook

New Book! CHASING BILLY THE KID

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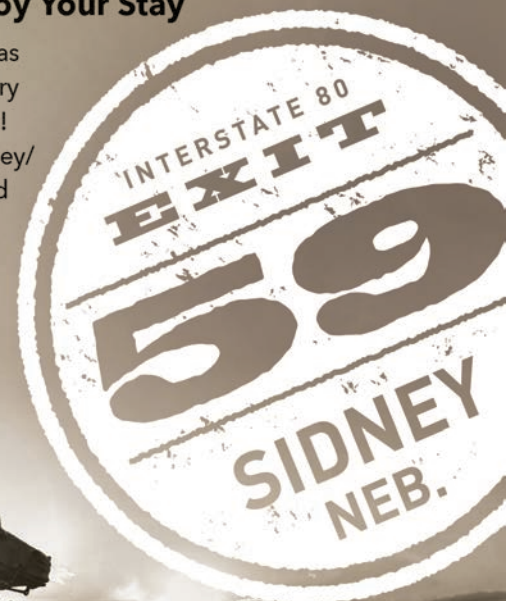
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The Cornhusker State

Historians don't just study dusty old court records and newspaper clippings, but maps as well. *Atlas of Nebraska* (Bison Books, \$34.95) by J. Clark Archer, Richard Edwards, Leslie M. Howard, Fred M. Shelley, Donald A. Wilhite and David J. Wishart is a colorful and handsome addition to the study of the Great Plains state. An invaluable resource for anyone interested in the Plains Indian Wars or the building of the Transcontinental Railroad, *Atlas of Nebraska* is an exhaustive study of all things Nebraska. The book is oversized and clocks in at 240 pages with 343 maps and 36 charts which cover everything from the state's Indigenous history to the settlement patterns to crime rates. Individual chapters are devoted to the physical environment, history, culture, population and more. For anyone researching Nebraska history, this book will prove to be an essential tool as it carefully analyzes the state's data from prehistory through statehood.

—Erik J. Wright, Assistant Editor of
 The Tombstone Epitaph



A Survivor's Story

Ashley Sweeney's newest book, *Hardland* (She Writes Press, \$17.95), is a stunner that sweeps the reader right into the fictional story of Ruby Fortune, once billed as Girl Wonder on the Wild West circuit. The narrative, told in a bold and straightforward manner, begins in the Arizona Territory in 1899. Having been in an abusive relationship with Willie Fortune for years, Ruby is pushed to the brink. She begins to see clearly one bullet as her way out for a chance to start a new life for her family. Ruby's story is a testimonial to human endurance, resilience and love. She embodies the tough spirit of millions of women who've found their voices to speak up about abusive relationships, making them stronger. The well-crafted story is firmly grounded in the past, but its powerful messages still resonate today.

—Sue Ready, Ever Ready Book Reviews

He Was Just a Kid

Love him or despise him, most people have an opinion of Billy the Kid. In *Before Billy the Kid: The Boy Behind the Legendary Outlaw* (TwoDot, \$21.95) author Melody Groves expresses her opinion: "Billy the Kid is my outlaw and my hero." Having grown up and living in New Mexico's Billy the Kid country, Groves weaves the Kid's tale from her perspective concentrating on his early years. She contends the Kid was basically good and would have led a different life if his mother had not died when he was 13. Left on his own, he gradually descended into a life of crime, always struggling to go straight. His sense of honor and loyalty to his murdered employer John Tunstall was the Kid's ultimate downfall. Groves' book is an informative and enjoyable read.

—Bill Markley, author of *Billy the Kid*
 and *Jesse James: Outlaws of the
 Legendary West*



An Apache Adventure

W. Michael Farmer's *Trini! Come! Geronimo's Captivity of Trinidad Verdín, a Novel* (Five Star, \$25.95) is a fast-paced story of courage, drama and family told with great sympathy as it reveals the lives and motivations of both Apaches and settlers. Michael Farmer has a true depth of understanding of the Apache people.

Without apology he tells of Geronimo's 1886 raids through the eyes of a captive girl who wins the Apache leader's respect and love. The tale is real; I've stood in the ruin of Peck's rancho. Trini escaped to tell her story.

—Doug Hocking,
 author of

Tom Jeffords: Friend of Cochise



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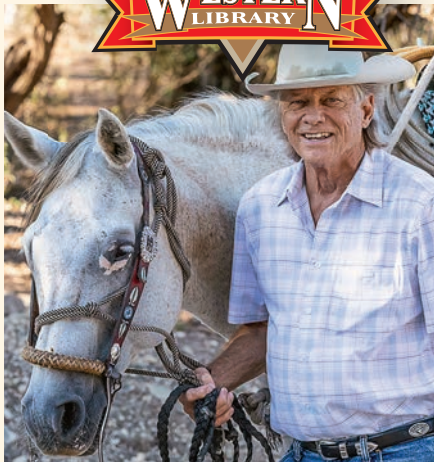


Photo by Tessa Kolodny

TEXAS HISTORIAN SHARES HIS FAVORITE VOLUMES ON THE LONE STAR STATE

Raymond V. Carter Jr. learned his family's storied Texas history firsthand from his grandfather Pete Coffman. Carter Jr. was inspired and since has collected, written and recorded oral Texas histories. He also recently published his life's work: *Texas Gold Rushes: 450 Years of Prospecting and Mining for Gold and Silver in the Texas Hill Country* (Self-published). His recommended books about Texas include:

- 1 ***Breaks of the Balcones*** by Allan A. Stovall (Self-published): Stovall, a retired teacher, knew the history of the region, and tells it from the pioneers' point of view and experience.
- 2 ***The Trail Drivers of Texas*** edited by J. Marvin Hunter (Cokesbury Press): The marrow of the bone, these waddies (men, boys and women) lived it. My grandfather gathered mavericks off a 30,000-acre ranch under one fence. Firsthand data!
- 3 ***With the Makers of San Antonio*** by Frederick C. Chabot (Self-published): Chabot's work helps readers get to know the characters in the Bexar and State Spanish archives. These people built this land called Texas. A must.
- 4 ***Three Roads to the Alamo*** by William C. Davis (HarperCollins): In 1959 my grandfather led me by the hand around the Alamo, describing our family's bloodshedding in the Battle of the Alamo! Davis's work removes the legend and draws the line in the sand.
- 5 ***The San Saba Treasure*** by David C. Lewis (University of North Texas Press): Lewis uses both worlds (legend and academic) to separate the wheat and chaff. His ancestor was part of Texas history.

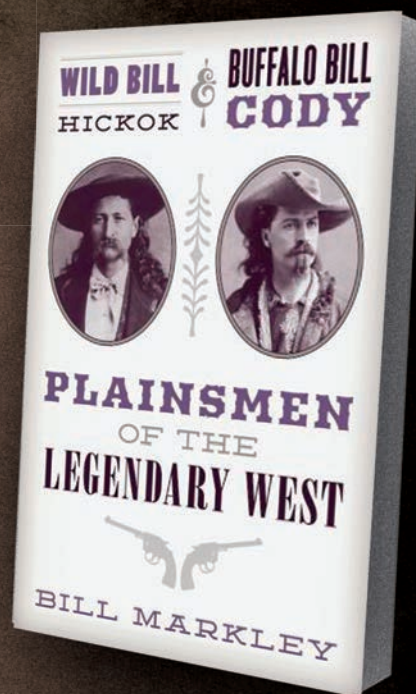
TWO PLAINSMEN WHO HELPED SHAPE THE WEST

BILL MARKLEY'S WILD BILL HICKOK AND BUFFALO BILL CODY: PLAINSMEN OF THE LEGENDARY WEST examines and then weaves together the many tales about these two western characters. Markley has carefully researched Hickok and Cody, separating fact from fiction and creating a narrative that is both entertaining and informative. Anyone who reads this book is not likely to confuse the two Bills for each other again.

—**STEVE FRIESEN**, author, and director of *The Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave*

If you have ever wondered what made time-honored legends Wild Bill Hickok and Buffalo Bill Cody tick, this book is for you. Author Bill Markley spent several years sifting through an abundance of materials to gain a better insight into the characters of these two remarkable men.

—**CAROLYN WEBER**, executive director of *Deadwood History, Inc.*



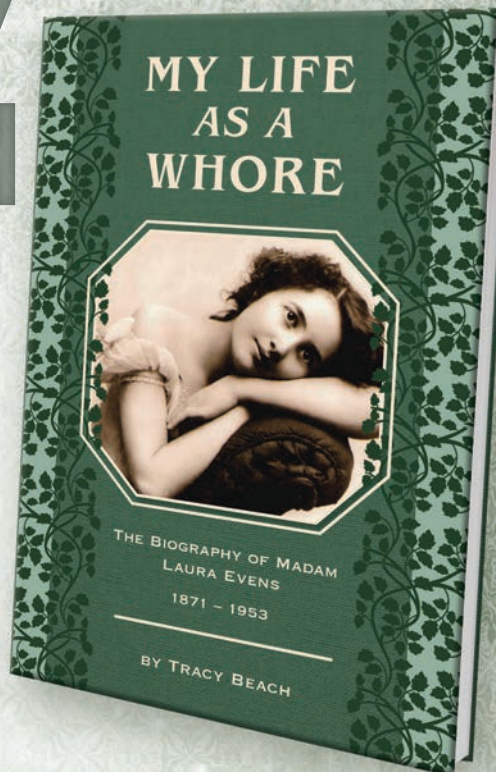
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From a lesbian encounter during her first audition into the trade, a gun fight to help save her business, her failed attempts to prevent her friends from poisonings themselves, selling bootleg booze for her supplier who lay dying on her couch, to identifying the corpse of a friend beaten to death by a lover, Laura achieved her goal of owning an entire red light district, which stayed open until December 1949.



Available on AMAZON and wherever books are sold!

Barry Corbin

The veteran actor has defined the art of bringing bad news to good Westerns.



In 1988, Barry Corbin (left) costarred in his very memorable role as Deputy Roscoe Brown beside Chris Cooper as Sheriff July Johnson in CBS's legendary Western mini-series *Lonesome Dove*.

Images Courtesy CBS Television



There are a certain very few actors whose presence lends the Westerns they appear in an instant credibility and gravitas. Ben Johnson and Harry Carey Jr. are the classic examples. Now that mantle rests on the shoulders of Barry Corbin. "That's a huge compliment to me because I was a fan of both of 'em. Matter of fact, my wife's sort of adopted father was Dobe (Harry Jr.) Carey. Dobe was a great guy, and Ben was one of my heroes growing up.

"We were doing one of Ben's rodeos one time; my horse fell on me, so I was in a cast. So, we were sitting up in the bleachers, watching some of the Hollywood folks practicing team penning. I said, 'Look at them riding around; they don't know there's a cow within a hundred miles. All they want to do is wave at the audience.' And Ben said, 'Ain't nobody in Hollywood knows how to ride anymore, except you and me.' And I said, 'Well, man, we don't live in Hollywood.'"

Corbin was interested in acting early on. "I didn't tell anybody at that time, but when I was seven, watching B-westerns at The Majestic in La Mesa, Texas, I thought, I can do that. First, I was looking at guys like Wild Bill Elliot and Allan Rocky Lane, [but] the other guys, sidekicks, seemed to work more and have more fun. I always liked Al "Fuzzy" St. John, Gabby Hayes.

"My dad, who was a lawyer and a politician said, 'Acting's a fine hobby, but nobody makes a living doing that.' He finally came around when I started doing movies and television." But when Barry was in *Henry V* on Broadway, "He thought I was doing something illicit, like holding up banks."

After the New York blackout in 1977, "I thought, I've had enough of this, so we loaded up our Ford Pinto and took off for California." He and his wife barely got by, writing and performing short plays on National Public

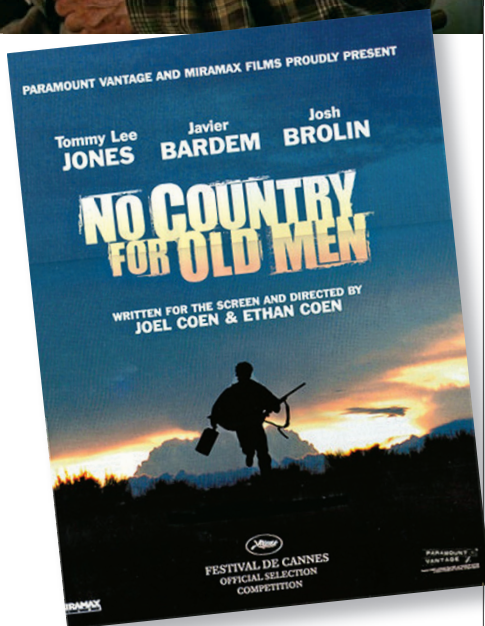
Radio. "I got *Urban Cowboy* right after [their second son] was born, so that worked out real well." It made his career.

That was quickly followed by *Any Which Way You Can*, and later *Honky-Tonk Man*. "I think Clint Eastwood is a good actor, but he's a better director because he knows how to say what he needs in very few words. You know, a lot of directors, they expound on things and end up confusing you."

He worked steadily in TV and film, embodying an authority that made him a natural wearing a badge, and made Corbin a master at delivering bad news. In Westerns like *Shadow on the Mesa*, *Redemption: For Robbing the Dead* and *Conagher*, if someone has to be told that their husband/daughter/son is missing or dead, Corbin is the man to do it. Unforgettably, in the Coen Brothers' *No Country for Old Men*, he only has one scene, at the end, and his manager wasn't sure he'd do it, even

with Tommy Lee Jones. "I read that scene, and I didn't even finish the script. Hell, yes, I'll do it! That scene is the movie: it makes everything clear."

In *Lonesome Dove* he played a deputy, but one with neither confidence nor authority. "That's one of my favorites. I read that book and I thought, I've got to be in this thing. Roscoe Brown was a 10-year-old child in a 40-year-old body. When Blue Duck killed the two kids and me, he killed three children." It was his first time with director Simon Wincer. "I've worked for him three times: *Lonesome Dove*, *Crossfire Trail* and *Monte Walsh*, and it was a great experience. He's a



In 2007, Barry Corbin had a small but memorable role as Ellis in the Coen Brothers' award-winning modern Western *No Country for Old Men*. The film is one of the few Westerns, contemporary or traditional, to win the Oscar for Best Picture.

Images Courtesy Miramax Films

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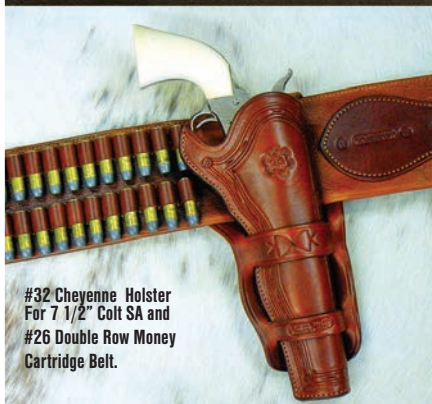
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Sam Elliott (left) and Barry Corbin reestablished their on-screen chemistry in Netflix's comedy *The Ranch* in 32 episodes between 2016 and 2020.

Courtesy Netflix

very good director, not precious about it. He just gets the job done. That's the way Australians do things."

Then in 1991, Corbin shared the screen for the fourth time, first time in a Western, with Sam Elliott and his wife Katharine Ross, in *Conagher*. In the film, Ross, husband Billy Green Bush and their children move onto a ranch, and Bush disappears on a cattle-buying trip. While it's unspoken, there is a poignancy to Corbin's stagecoach driver's feelings toward the widow. "I figured old Charlie was secretly in love with her, and he'd like to marry her, but he had to see Conagher (Elliott) get her."

In 2001, Corbin wore a badge again in his first collaboration with Tom Selleck, *Crossfire*

Trail. Memorably, literally under the gun, Corbin performs a marriage between villain Mark Harmon and the desperately resisting Virginia Madsen, with his own character murmuring, "Not my finest hour." Two years later he worked with Selleck again in *Monte Walsh*.

"Tom's a good guy. Tom makes sure all his equipment is right, and every time he makes a Western, he has a saddle made for it." For *Monte Walsh*, "his spurs had a bar across it so that the rowel wouldn't turn, but just half a turn. 'Cause that's what the bronc stompers used to use." The actor who'll turn 82 this October adds, "I'd love to see him do another Western. I think he'd hire me back."



Taylor Sheridan cast veteran Western character actor Barry Corbin as Ross in the 2021 season of Paramount's *Yellowstone*.

Courtesy Paramount



Courtesy Warner Bros.

BLU-RAY REVIEW

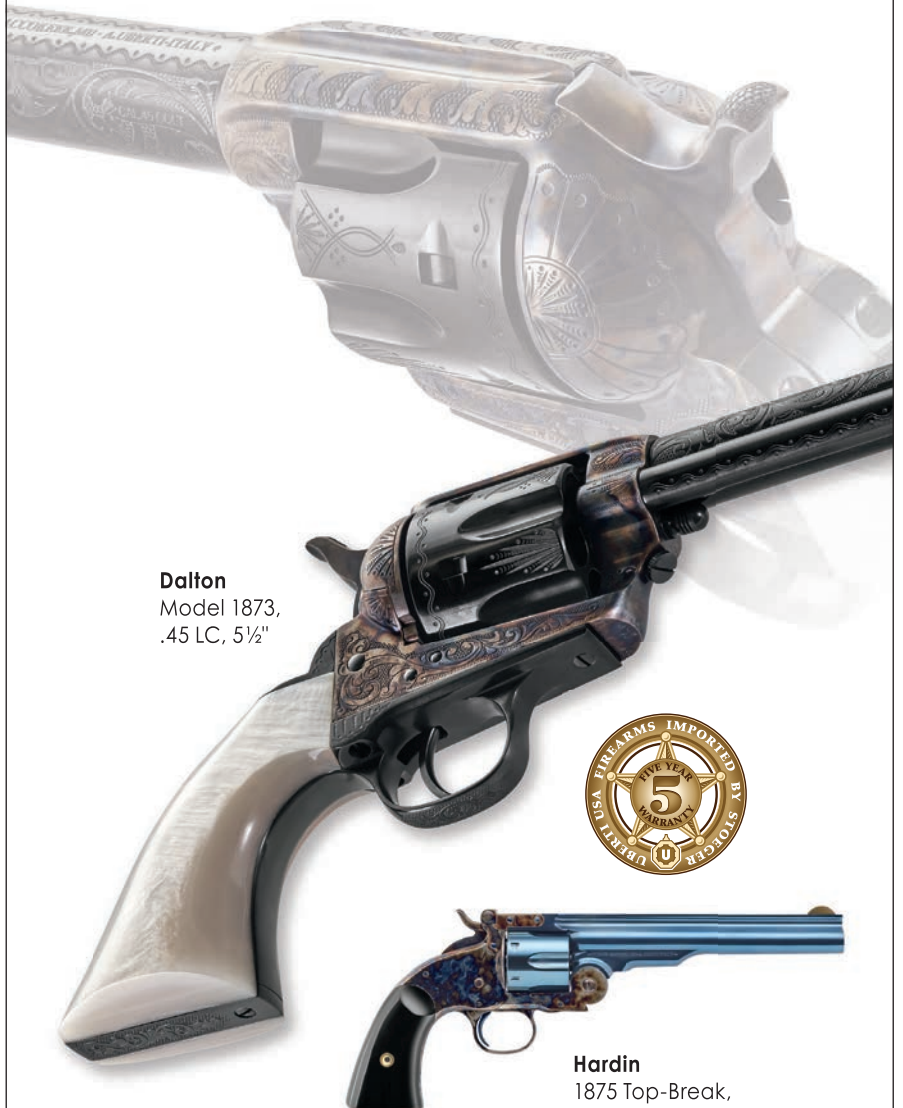
THE FRISCO KID

(Warner Archive Collection—Blu-Ray, \$21.99) Surprisingly, *Blazing Saddles* was not Gene Wilder's only Western comedy. Five years later he played a last-in-his-class Polish Rabbi, journeying from Europe and across the U.S. to a Rabbi-less congregation in San Francisco, and befriended and aided by train-robber Harrison Ford, just two years after becoming Han Solo. Granted, action-director Robert Aldrich (*Vera Cruz*, *Apache*) is no Mel Brooks, but this is a comedy about people, not about Western film clichés. And the endearing characters make up for some of the missed comic opportunities. Wilder is in fine comic form, so serious about his religion that even when evading a posse, he won't ride his horse until sunset on Saturday. And Aldrich knows how to make Westerns, playing the danger for real by using William Smith as the revenge-hungry antagonist.



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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HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

BY PETER CORBETT

Rawlins, Wyoming

The Old West is alive in the county seat and its neighboring towns of Carbon County.



For visitors to Rawlins and Carbon County, Wyoming, the Medicine Bow National Forest is popular for hiking, fishing, camping and backroad adventuring.

All Images Courtesy Wyoming Office of Tourism Unless Otherwise Noted

Butch Cassidy and his Wild Bunch were well known around Carbon County in south central Wyoming in the 1890s.

After a heist, the outlaw gang would flee to Little Snake River country to elude capture, the *Idaho Statesman* reported in 1909.

“They would clatter into the little town of Baggs...whooping and yelling and shooting out all the panes of window glass they had missed on previous visits,” the article said.

Leslie Jefferson, Carbon County Visitor’s Council CEO, said the gang stayed in the Baggs roadhouse of Pearl Mathews Gaddis. “The Mathews Gaddis House was the bar of choice,” she said. “They would wake up the town and have a party for a few days.”

Reports say local fiddler Tom Vernon would jam with Cassidy on harmonica and turn the place into a rowdy dancehall.

The Baggs roadhouse is one of many historic sites, museums, guest ranches, vintage hotels and other attractions in Carbon County’s 10 small towns—Baggs, Dixon, Elk Mountain, Encampment, Hanna, Medicine Bow, Riverside, Saratoga, Savery and Rawlins, the county seat.

Rawlins is named for Gen. John Rawlins, a member of the 1867 surveying party that established a Union Pacific Railroad route across Wyoming.

“I think the best way to experience Carbon County is to find lodging you’d like to be at for a few days,” Jefferson said. “Then you can take multiple day trips and scenic drives.”

Rawlins is home to the stark fortress of the Wyoming Frontier Prison, which incarcerated 13,500 inmates from 1901-81. Tours are offered daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The 1987 B-movie *Prison*, starring Viggo Mortensen, was filmed in the penitentiary.

If historic prisons aren’t your thing, the soothing waters of Carbon County’s mineral baths appeal to most weary travelers. Head southeast to Saratoga for a soak in its hot springs. Anyone can enjoy the free Hobo Hot Pool, which has a bathhouse with showers and is open 24 hours a day all year long.

Saratoga Hot Springs Resort has been hosting guests for more than a century. Its mineral baths are covered by teepees that provide privacy. The resort also features a nine-hole golf course, brew



Since 1877, Saratoga Resort and Spa, which started as a log cabin, has allowed health-seekers and travelers to enjoy the town's soothing, naturally heated pools.

Modern Photo Courtesy Wyoming Office of Tourism / Historic Image Courtesy Saratoga/Platte Valley Chamber of Commerce

pub and rental access to mountain bikes, all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles.

Saratoga's other historic inn is the Hotel Wolf, which opened in 1893. Its current owners, Doug and Kathleen Campbell, have operated the three-story brick hotel for 45 years. It includes a saloon and dining room.

Medicine Bow, northeast of Saratoga, takes a bow for its 1911 Virginian Hotel, named for Western writer Owen Wister, whose 1902 novel, *The Virginian*, is considered one of the first and best Westerns ever written.

Carbon County is also home to luxury guest ranches. Brush Creek Ranch near Saratoga was



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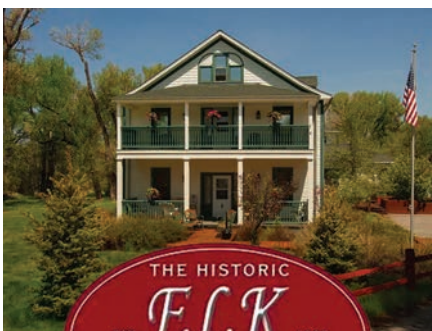
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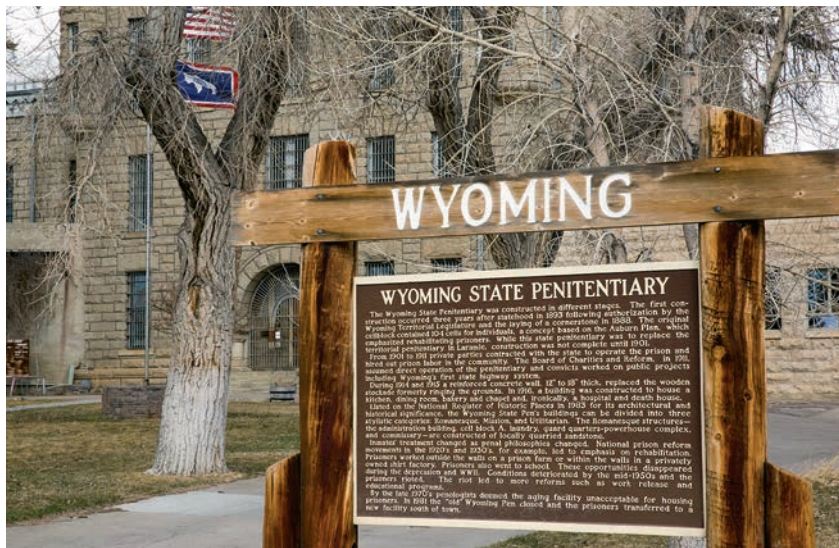


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In Rawlins, the historic Wyoming Frontier Prison offers visitors insight into state history from the time it opened in 1901 until it was closed in 1981. The original 104 cells lacked running water and electricity.

branded in 2020 as the Best U.S. Resort by readers of *Travel + Leisure* magazine. It includes a spa, distillery, bakery, creamery and the 20,000-square-foot greenhouse, where vegetables for its dining room are grown. Guest activities include fly fishing, target shooting, hiking, rock climbing and riding horses.

Three Forks Ranch near the Colorado border at Savery, Wyoming, is focused on health and wellness. In addition to outdoor activities—hiking, trout fishing and skiing—guests can enjoy a wide array of treatments at the 6,000-square-foot spa.

Another Carbon County lodging gem is the Elk Mountain Hotel. The cozy three-story

hotel in Elk Mountain has hosted travelers since 1905. Prior to that it was a stage stop on the Overland Trail at a crossing of the Medicine Bow River.

The hotel was linked with the Garden Spot Pavilion, a dance hall that after World War II featured dozens of touring acts after World War II, including Bob Wills, Hank Thompson and Tex Williams, whose big hit song was "Smoke, Smoke, Smoke (That Cigarette)." ❖

Born west of the Missouri in Omaha, **Peter Corbett** moved to the Southwest nearly a half century ago. He is a graduate of Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff and had a 35-year career as an Arizona journalist.



The Hotel Wolf is a popular historic hotel in Saratoga, Wyoming. Founded in 1893, the inn remains a landmark of hospitality in the Carbon County town.

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SaratogaHotSpringsResort.com

WILD BUNCH HANGOUT IN BAGGS

Butch Cassidy's gang of outlaws patronized the Mathews Gaddis House, a roadhouse in Baggs.
WyomingCarbonCounty.com

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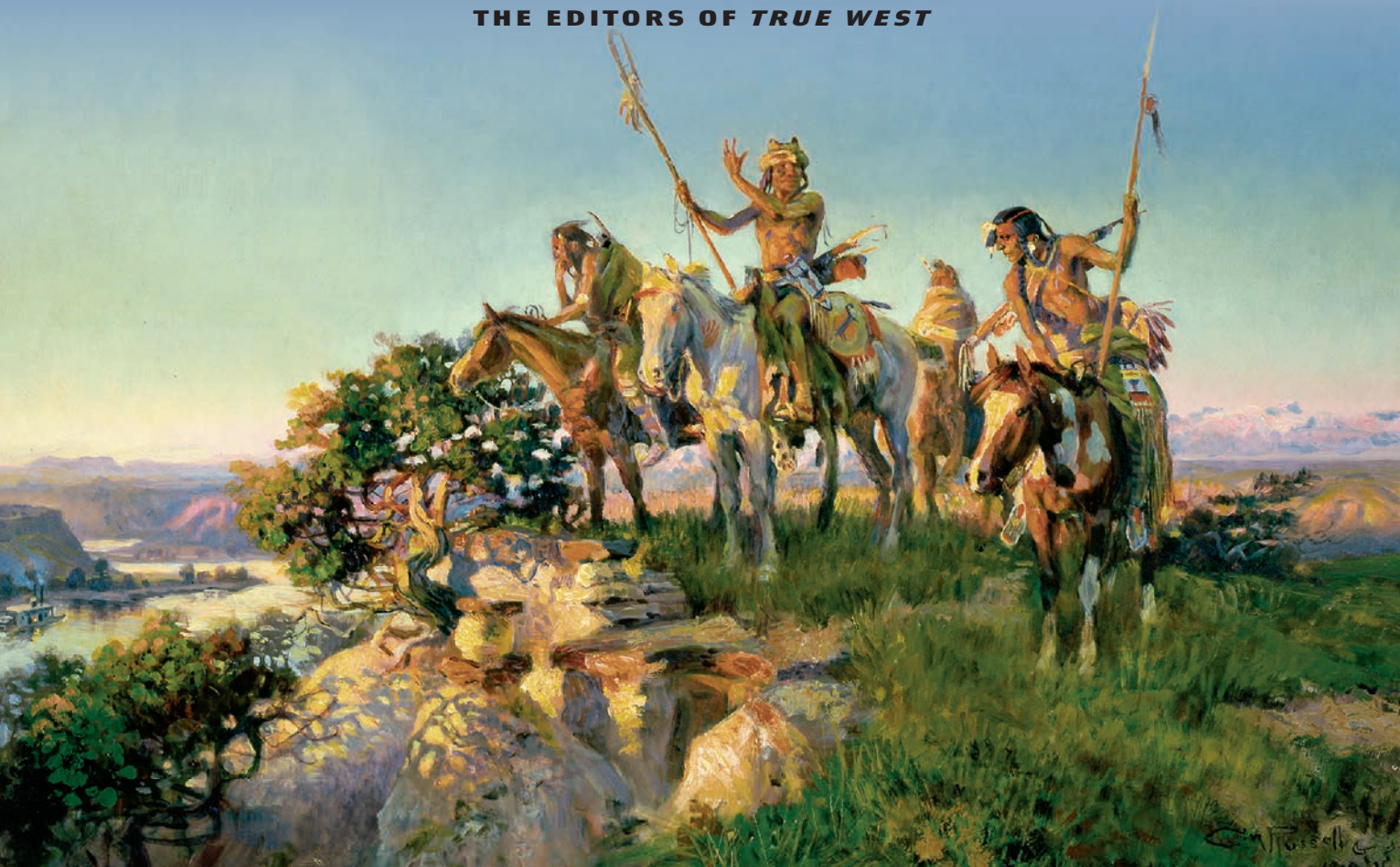
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KEEPING THE WEST ALIVE!

BY JOHNNY D. BOGGS AND
THE EDITORS OF *TRUE WEST*



True West's #1 Western Art Museum in 2022, the C.M. Russell Museum in Great Falls, Montana, is well known for its annual Russell auction, its rotating exhibits, Russell's studio and one of the most comprehensive collections of Charles M. Russell original art, including his masterpiece *Fireboat*.

Courtesy C.M. Russell Museum

WESTERN ART MUSEUMS PAINT A PICTURE OF OPTIMISM AND EXCITEMENT DURING A TIME OF CHANGES.

“This is an ongoing question for Western art museums,” Christina Horton, communications officer for the C.M. Russell Museum in Great Falls, Montana, says.

The question, of course, is: What efforts are you doing to bring in younger fans of Western art, or getting youth to learn about Western art/history?

Which is something Western art museums have been trying to figure out across the United States.

“Our average visitor is in their 60s,” Horton says, “so it’s something we ask every day.”

“I equate it with not hearing babies crying in church,” adds Deana Lowe Craighead, hired in August 2021 as curator of art at Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum in Canyon, Texas. “If you don’t have a new generation...the health of your organization is in jeopardy. One of the things that makes museums more relevant is appealing to moms and young families. But that’s a hard group to court.”



**Olaf Wieghorst Museum
El Cajon, California**

Wagon Train by Olaf Wieghorst
Courtesy Olaf Wieghorst Museum

The C.M. Russell Museum attracted younger visitors in 2020 with an exhibit on Andy Warhol. “We’re also stepping up our presence on Instagram and interacting with contemporary Western artists,” Horton says.

Meanwhile, the museum’s main fundraising event, “The Russell,” held August 18-21, was reimagined this year with more than 100 artist suites free and open to the public—a first at the museum. “In these suites,” Horton said, “people see artwork and engage with the artists who created it. All of the artists have pieces in the auction, as well.”

Darrell Beauchamp, executive director of the Museum of Western Art in Kerrville, Texas, stresses the importance of outreach programs to area schools to help bring in new fans, patrons and, possibly, new Western artists down the road.

“We are actively involved in a Western Art Academy, which brings 48 high school students to campus for an intensive monthlong immersive art experience at our local Schreiner University,” Beauchamp says. “In addition to the work being done through our education program, the museum offers rotating exhibitions that change every 60 to 90 days, and we offer... art workshops featuring artists instructors from around the country.”

The Booth Western Art Museum in Cartersville, Georgia, features children’s art workshops throughout the year and displays annual art exhibitions for elementary through high school students, while “Sagebrush Ranch is an award-winning, hands-on experience and interactive children’s gallery,” says Grace Adams, the Booth’s director of communications.

It helps to be in an art destination like Taos, New Mexico (Taos Art Museum at Fechin House). And having a well-known name—regionally or nationwide—is a bonus at the Frederic Remington Art Museum in Ogdensburg, New York; the A.R.



The Phippen Museum • Prescott, Arizona

Boss has a Young 'en by George Phippen

Courtesy of George Phippen Studio/Gallery LLC



**Museum of Western Art
Kerrville, Texas**

Wind and Rain by William Moyers

Courtesy Museum of Western Art



**J. Waid Griffin
Albuquerque,
New Mexico**

Canyon Rider-Supai
by J. Waid Griffin

Courtesy J. Waid Griffin

Mitchell Museum in Trinidad, Colorado; and the Olaf Wieghorst Museum & Heritage Center in El Cajon, California.

“Charlie Russell has incredible name recognition in the world of Western art,” Horton says. “Generally speaking, if someone is discussing art depicting the West, the Russell name will come up because he lived here and experienced nearly every aspect of the West. His authenticity cannot be argued, and his personality has made him beloved—everyone has heard a story about Russell’s kindness or sense of humor.

“Our hope is to share those stories outside the world of the West.”

It also helps to be more than just an art museum. The Whitney Western Art Museum is one of five museums at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West in Cody, Wyoming, with others focusing on namesake William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody, Plains Indians, natural history and firearms. In addition to art, the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City showcases rodeo, Western performers, Native Americans and frontier history.

“The Booth’s permanent collection of Western art, presidential portraits and letters, and Civil War art allows visitors to ‘See America’s Story’—the land, people, struggles, dreams, and legends—in paintings, sculpture, photography and artifacts,” Adams says.

The Panhandle-Plains Historical



**Taos Art Museum
Taos, New Mexico**

Study, McMullen Guide
by W.H. (Buck) Dunton

Courtesy Taos Art Museum

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Sherry Blanchard Stuart
Cave Creek, Arizona

Bringing in the Filly
 by Sherry Blanchard Stuart
 Courtesy Sherry Blanchard Stuart

Museum also interprets “History of the Land of the Panhandle,” “History of the Peoples of the Panhandle-Plains Region” and houses a research center, library and archives.

“Having more things appeals to more people,” Craighead says. “By virtue of offering a wider view of things, you attract a wider audience, but it also gives us an opportunity to put our objects in conversation with each other. We can have multidisciplinary exhibitions. We can put our art in conversation with our historical objects. You can’t do that if you’re strictly visual arts.”

In Omaha, Nebraska, the Joslyn Art Museum has a different kind of challenge. On May 2, the museum closed for a massive expansion and construction project and is not scheduled to reopen until 2024.

“Sharing our collection during closure is a priority,” says Jack Becker, the Joslyn’s executive director and CEO.

Ancient Greek pottery has been loaned to The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri, and 50 works from the European collection visits the Taubman Museum of Art in Roanoke, Virginia, this fall and the Philbrook Museum of Art in Tulsa, Oklahoma, early next year.

As part of the first Art Bridges Collection Loan Program, an initiative of the Art Bridges Foundation, 13 American West works—including pieces by Russell, Albert Bierstadt, George Caleb Bingham, Frank Tenney Johnson, Alfred Jacob Miller and Thomas Moran—go on loan through the fall of 2023 to Portland (Maine) Museum of Art; Figge Art Museum in Davenport, Iowa; Hudson River Museum in Yonkers, New York; and Museum of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg, Florida.

And “Faces from the Interior: The North American Portraits of Karl Bodmer,” featuring more than 60 recently conserved watercolors from the Joslyn’s Maximilian-Bodmer collection, runs at Amon Carter Museum of American Art from October 30 through January 22.

New faces bring in new ideas, too.

In January, the Joslyn hired Thomas



Cowboy Legacy • Scottsdale, Arizona

Northern Plains Buffalo Horn headdress with quilled brow band ca 1860s
 Artist Unknown
 Courtesy Cowboy Legacy

Busciglio-Ritter as the Richard and Mary Holland Assistant Curator of American Western Art. A native of France and doctoral candidate in art history at the University of Delaware, Busciglio-Ritter focuses on the visual culture of American frontier landscape, American race relations and tourism.

The C.M. Russell Museum “is lucky to have a young, energetic staff,” Horton says, “including Associate Curator Sarah Adcock and Assistant Curator Olivia Cotterman, who bring new ideas and interpretations to the incredible works in our collection, as well as identifying outside exhibitions we can bring in our galleries.”

“At the same time I was hired, we hired a new executive director and a new history curator,” Panhandle-Plains’



Blackhawk Museum • Danville, California

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Courtesy Blackhawk Museum



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Linda Glover Gooch, “Backroad Paradise” 12x16, Oil (detail)

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Courtesy Tacoma Art Museum, Haub Family Collection, Gift of Erivan and Helga Haub

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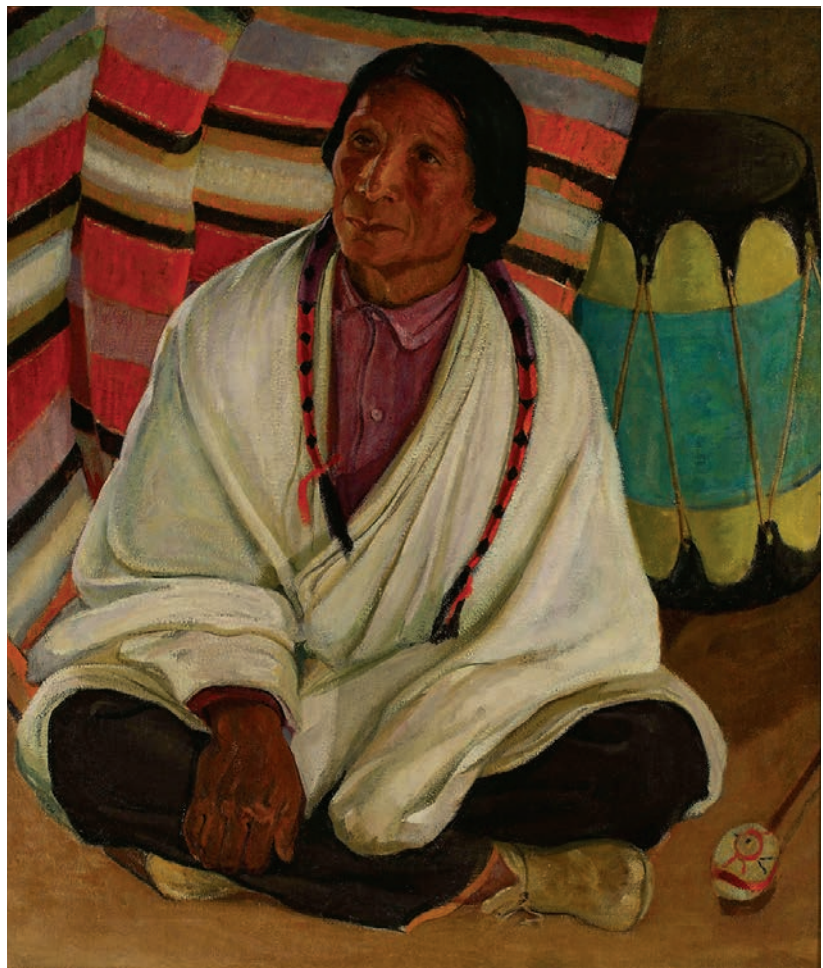
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Artist - Jimmy Green



Craighead says, "so I think there's a fresher perspective. New stuff. New people. New ideas."

Western art museums are going "only up from here," Adams says.

Beauchamp agrees. "The state of Western art museums is good," he says, "and getting better every year."

"Since the Museum of Western Art opened nearly 40 years ago, several museums have opened that are dedicated to the preservation of Western art. Our museum's attendance continues to grow, and we continue to introduce new patrons to our exciting genre of art."

"We call Western art, 'art for people who don't like art,'" Adams says. "Who doesn't love the breathtaking plains of the American West, horses...and cowboys?"

It's a something that we all can feel a sense of pride in. ✪

Johnny D. Boggs has written about Western art for several magazines. He lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

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Saddle Rope MCS, MT c 1890s
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C.M. Russell Museum • Great Falls, Montana

Painted Bison Hide by Darrell Norman, Blackfeet
Angelika Harding Norman

Courtesy Collection of the C.M. Russell Museum



National Cowboy & Hall of Fame Museum Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

In from the Night Herd by Frederic Remington

Courtesy National Cowboy & Hall of Fame, 1975.019.0002



Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum Canyon, Texas

*Buffalo Chase Surround
by the Hidatsa*
by George Catlin

Courtesy PPHM



Desert Caballeros Western Museum Wickenburg, Arizona

The Advance by Frederic Remington

Courtesy Desert Caballeros Western Museum

Joslyn Art Museum Omaha, Nebraska

Assiniboin Camp
by Karl Bodmer

Courtesy Joslyn Art Museum





**Whitney Western Art Museum
Cody, Wyoming**

Nat Love
by James Bama
Courtesy Whitney Western Art Museum, BBCW



**Frederic Remington Museum
Ogdensburg, New York**

Untitled (cigarette)
by Frederic Remington
Courtesy Frederic Remington Museum

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**Spirit of the West Ranch
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Tombstone, Arizona**

And So She Walked Out of Our Lives Forever
by Jimmy Green

Courtesy Spirit of the West Ranch Old Western Art & Gallery

The frontier battles between lawmen and outlaws have inspired Western artists and illustrators for more than a century.

The Old West event that still inspires the imaginations of writers and artists is the legendary battle between the Earps and the Cowboys in Tombstone and Cochise County, Arizona Territory, which culminated in the famous gunfight on Allen Street near the O.K. Corral. Recently, a new artist, Jimmy Green, has offered his take on the historic denizens of the Town Too Tough to Die and the famed actors who portrayed the heroes and villains in the 1993 film Tombstone. We share with you artwork from Green and a diverse group of artists—from N.C. Wyeth and A.R. Mitchell to Thom Ross, Bill Nebeker, John Wade Hampton and our very own Bob Boze Bell—who have been inspired by the famous shootout and the frontier battle between law and order that played out across the Arizona Territory 140 years ago.

—Stuart Rosebrook



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I'll Fight You Right Now by Jimmy Green

Courtesy Spirit of the West Ranch Old Western Art & Gallery



**Bob Boze Bell,
True West
Cave Creek,
Arizona**

Walkdown
by Bob Boze Bell

Courtesy True West Archives

AND OUTLAWS

Sorrel Sky Gallery • Santa Fe, New Mexico

My Darling Clementine by Thom Ross

Courtesy Thom Ross, Photo by Wendy McEachern Photography



Founder of the Feast by Jimmy Green

Courtesy Spirit of the West Ranch Old Western Art & Gallery



Booth Museum • Cartersville, Georgia

1881-Gunfight at the O.K. Corral—

The First Six Seconds
by John Wade Hampton

Courtesy Booth Western Art Museum



**National Cowboy & Western
Heritage Museum**

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

*My English friend thought it was
a hold-up* by N.C. Wyeth

Courtesy National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum



A.R. Mitchell Museum • Trinidad, Colorado

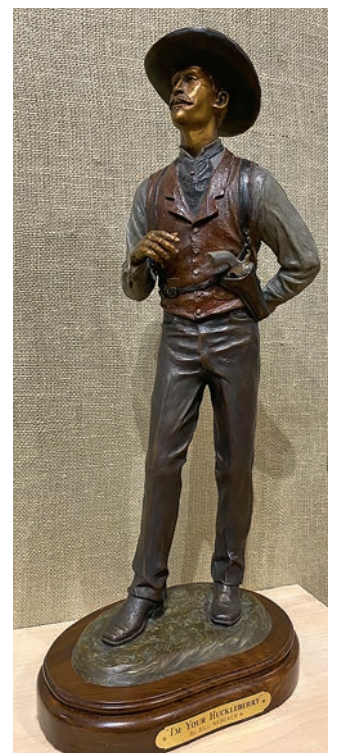
Hold Up by A.R. Mitchell

Courtesy A. R. Mitchell Museum

**The Phippen Museum
Prescott, Arizona**

I'm Your Huckleberry by Bill Nebeker

Courtesy The Phippen Museum and Bill Nebeker



BUCKEYE BLAKE: A MAN OF THE WEST

Buckeye Blake

All Images Courtesy Buckeye Blake Unless Otherwise Noted

Equally at home on horseback working outdoors as he in his studio outside Weatherford, Texas, artist Buckeye Blake has been drawing and painting his beloved West since he was a child. Raised across the American Southwest, Blake comes from a long line of Westerners and highly respected horsemen. His grandfather Coke Blake is credited with developing one of the longest lineages of Oklahoma quarter horses, and his father was a rodeo cowboy, border agent and a true Westerner.

Today, Blake—who is also a great student of Western history—is equally passionate about painting and sculpting the people and the places of the West he loves, which is revealed in the diversity of his portraits, landscapes and sculptures. He also has a dream project that he has been working on for many years, a shrine to Billy the Kid at Fort Sumner. *The Wake of Billy the Kid* aka *The Shrine of Billy the Kid* (see BBB's "To the Point" on page 11) would be the centerpiece of his ambitious memorial to the legendary New Mexico outlaw. As Blake's project on Billy progresses, *True West* will continue to report updates. —SR



Navajo, Fort Sumner by Buckeye Blake



Broadmoor Galleries • Colorado Springs, Colorado

The Cowboy Horse Race by Buckeye Blake

Courtesy Broadmoor Galleries



**Whitney Western Art Museum
Cody, Wyoming**

The Drovers Dance by Buckeye Blake

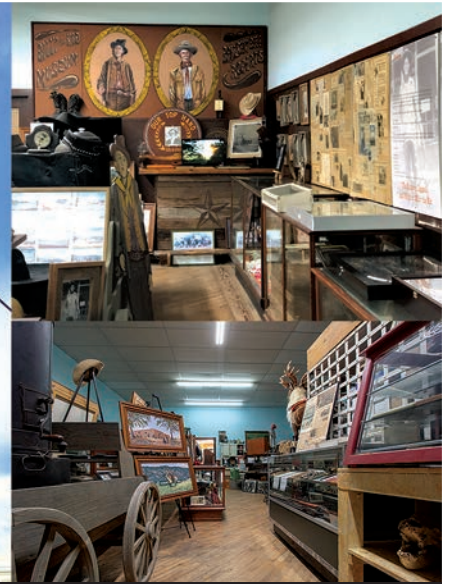
Courtesy Whitney Western Art Museum



El Chavito
by Buckeye Blake



Billy and Paulita
by Buckeye Blake



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Courtesy Dalton Defender Days, Coffeyville, KS

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405-478-2250 • NationalCowboyMuseum.org

PRESCOTT STUDIO TOUR

Prescott, AZ, September 30-October 2: The 15th annual tour is a celebration of the arts and the artists in the Prescott Quad-City area. It is a free, three-day event that allows you to visit private artists' studios, see the artists in action, learn how they create their art and purchase unique art for yourself or as gifts.
928-830-8236 • PrescottStudioTour.com

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Kerrville, TX, October 7-9: Head to this 1857 Texas Hill Country town for a prospect show, cook-off, bull rides, downtown parade and dances.
830-257-6833 • KerrCountyFair.com

FILM FESTIVALS

LONE PINE FILM FESTIVAL

Lone Pine, CA, October 6-9: Be sure to join all the festival supporters, stars, performers and behind-the-scenes volunteers who make this amazing small town, home-spun film festival happen. Sunday evening, just at dusk, the entire crowd gathers for the closing campfire at Lone Pine's Spainhower Park at the north end of town.
760-876-9909 • LonePineFilmFestival.org

42ND ANNUAL FOLK MUSIC FESTIVAL

Prescott, AZ, October 3-4: Enjoy the music of more than 200 musicians from throughout the Southwest, with 90-plus performances at four venues on the Sharlot Hall Museum campus. Bring your own instruments and jam with the artists at this longest-running folk music event in the state.
928-445-3132 • SharlotHallMuseum.org

GUN SHOWS

TEXAS GUN COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION SHOW

Denton, TX, October 21-23: Held at Embassy Suites Hotel, this collectors' showcase offers historical firearms and edged weapons.
210-323-9519 • TGCA.org

HERITAGE FESTIVALS

HELLDORADO DAYS

Tombstone, AZ, October 21-23: So much has changed in the world, and yet the citizens of Tombstone will throw open their town as they have for 88 years to welcome people who love the history and magic of Tombstone and want to be a part of this annual fun-for-the-entire-family event.
888-457-3929 • TombstoneWeb.com

REX ALLEN DAYS

Willcox, AZ, September 29-October 2: Willcox brings its heroes to life every October. Enjoy the traditions of yesterday, with events all over town, including the annual parade, rodeo and fair.
520-384-4626 • RexAllenDays.org

COWBOY WAY JUBILEE

San Angelo, TX, September 30-October 1: This two-day event presents "Everything Cowboy" with Western music, Western films and TV shows and Hollywood celebrities.
580-768-5559 • CowboyWayJubilee.com

FALL FOR HISTORY

Wallace, ID, September 30-October 2: Celebrate the mining town's history in the most colorful time of the year. Wallace's Fall for History Festival is a gala celebration of the town's heritage, featuring speakers, historic home and museum tours, live theater, military reenactments and more.
208-753-7151 • WallaceID.fun

COWBOYS ON MAIN

Bandera, TX, October 1-20: Come sit on Redneck the Longhorn and take your picture, or visit with Kelly Scott and his chuckwagon, or take a ride in Ron Dakota's horse-drawn wagon around the town square. Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
830-796-4413 • BanderaCowboyCapital.com

TRAILING OF THE SHEEP FESTIVAL

Ketchum, ID, October 5-9: Be a part of another year of stories as the festival meets its mission to gather, present and preserve the history and culture of sheep ranching and herding in Idaho and the West.
208-720-0585 • TrailingOfTheSheep.org

SUNDOWN WALK WITH THE SPIRITS OF CONCORDIA CEMETERY

El Paso, TX, October 15: Walk through the 1872 cemetery to learn the history of John Wesley Hardin, the Buffalo Soldiers and other permanent residents.
915-842-8200 • ConcordiaCemetery.org

DURANGO COWBOY POETRY GATHERING

Durango, CO, September 29-October 2: The gathering is an exciting, fun-filled event with evening performances and Saturday daytime sessions. Poets and musicians from around the country grace an intimate stage at a local theater, performing classic and contemporary poems and songs.
970-749-5663 • DurangoCowboyGathering.org

RED STEAGALL COWBOY GATHERING & WESTERN SWING FESTIVAL

Fort Worth, TX, October 28-30: Enjoy Western swing music, cowboy poetry, a chuckwagon cook-off and a rodeo—all at Fort Worth Stockyards.
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HERITAGE RAILROADS

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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.

Pocket Guns, Ned Kelly and The Kid

I've read the transcript of Wyatt Earp's testimony at the inquest following the gunfight at (near) the O.K. Corral, and it seems he drew his gun from a coat pocket when the shooting started. Why would a professional lawman do that?

*Mike Burke
Wilmington, Delaware*

None of the Earp brothers were wearing holsters that day. Had they been riding out to some ranch to make an arrest, they would have strapped on gun belts, but they could be cumbersome to wear in town. It wasn't uncommon for men to carry their pistols in their trousers or coat pockets, or even to stick them in the waist of their trousers.

Some men lined the pockets of their coats to keep their smoke wagons from getting hung up.



Prior to the gunfight with the cowboys behind the O.K. Corral in Tombstone, Virgil and Wyatt Earp (left and right) were seen with J.L. Fonck standing in front of a vacant store. They were not wearing gun belts, but Wyatt had a pistol stuffed in his clothing, as did Virgil, who also wielded a menacing double-barreled shotgun.

Illustration by Bob Boze Bell, True West Archives

Are you familiar with Australian outlaw Ned Kelly?

*David Durost
Lancaster, California*

Ned Kelly is Australia's answer to America's Jesse James. Ned, the oldest son, got into crime at a young age, as did his brothers. He hooked up with a notorious bushranger named Henry Power, who became his mentor. As an adult, Kelly became a horse thief, train robber and a murderer. But to some, then and now, he became a Robin Hood figure, fighting to help the downtrodden. The gunfight with police that he's best known for was in June 1880 at the Glenrowan railway station during an attempted train robbery. He wore homemade armor—but was wounded 28 times. He was hanged on November 11, 1880.



Australian outlaw Ned Kelly became legendary as an outlaw of the Outback while wearing a suit of armor. Despite all his bravado and mythic status in Australia's bush country, Kelly was captured and executed for his capital crimes.

Courtesy State Library of Victoria, Australia

Is it true that the term "cowboys" was first used during the American Revolution?

*Andrew Rieve
Ramona, California*

Most likely, the term "cowboys" comes from the British light horse battalion under the command of Col. James De Lancey. The name was given to them by American soldiers and farmers, as a battalion often rounded up cattle for the British in their raids. One might say they were America's first cattle rustlers. The term was not a compliment.

Did the Indian tribes experience crimes such as theft, robbery and murder committed by and against tribe members? If so, how were they handled?

*Rich Bauer
Wheaton, Illinois*

Traditionally, there were many differences in the way justice was handled within the tribe. It usually depended on the seriousness of the crime. Some tribes, for example, allowed the victim's family to hand out the punishment. Others were decided by tribal consensus. Authority for decision-

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In the summer months of 1878, Billy the Kid and The Regulators secured their status as notorious New Mexico outlaws when they repeatedly stopped travelers and stole their horses and possessions along the road between Lincoln and Fort Stanton.

Illustration by Bob Boze Bell, True West Archives

making was grounded in the wider social group, and approval to pursue any course of actions against offensive behavior was achieved through tribal consensus. Tribes throughout the United States have continued to rely on certain aspects of their traditional practices for administering justice.

Should we really consider Billy the Kid an outlaw?

Dale Pionk
Eveleth, Minnesota

Billy was a livestock thief, and ranchers considered livestock an asset, same as money—they were sometimes called “hairy greenbacks.” Also, he took part in the killings of four Lincoln County lawmen. I’d say that qualifies him as an outlaw.

Does any film, however short, exist of Wyatt Earp?

Bill Haines
Nashville, Tennessee

Wyatt never appeared on the silver screen. It was suggested he appeared in a group scene in the 1916 film *The Half Breed* starring Douglas Fairbanks, but Wyatt Earp scholar Jeff Morey slowed down the scene and determined the character wasn’t Wyatt.



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What HISTORY HAS TAUGHT ME

I grew up in the San Fernando Valley, in Los Angeles.

My parents were always supportive of my creative pursuits. My early interest in art, learning to play the drums and the guitar, surfing and making surfboards in my parents' garage, were all encouraged. I never felt pressure to take a more "practical" route when beginning my career as a fine artist.

Going to school was not for me. I felt like I was in prison. As an adult, with children of my own, I am open to the idea that traditional schooling isn't made for all people.

Los Angeles in the '80s and '90s was a great place to grow up. Playing on our suburban street as a kid with my siblings was my world. As a young kid, I was exposed to the cultures of skateboarding, surfing, music and, of course, art. Seeing that people did all these things as their "professions" shaped who I became.

Illustrating is fine art and storytelling at its best. N.C. Wyeth, considered an illustrator, is one of my favorite artists of all time.

A comic book was probably my best training ground as an early artist. All I wanted to do was become a comic book artist. I practiced day and night copying the drawings in the pages of the comic books I collected. Reflecting on my childhood interest, I realize now that I never really read the stories. It was all about the art for me.

An artist should show you their unique view of how they see the world. When I think of the great artists throughout history, I can instantly envision their take on the world. The most interesting thing is seeing how two artists can look at the same subject and paint them in a completely different way.

A mentor should be able to guide without putting too much of their own vision into the critiques.

A summer sky is a playground of the imagination. Crazy cloud shapes, deep blues, dusty horizons, colorful sunsets—all elements I love to include in my artwork.

Maynard Dixon was a visionary. His unique take on the Southwest showed viewers that the desert was not a boring, brown place. His work was modernistic yet retained a healthy amount of realism. I feel thankful to Dixon and other artists of his era because they have helped me along on my path—just by being able to study their work.

The Navajo people have an amazingly rich history. Though I like to think of people as individuals and not a group, many Navajo people I have come across have been extremely warm, down to earth, and have very good senses of humor.

WESTERN ARTIST

Logan Maxwell Hagege (b. 1980) is a Los Angeles-based contemporary artist with modern visions of the West. Hagege's mature style, which he terms "stylized realism," has made him a master of geometric design where angles and edges are softened by the curve of billowing clouds. His signature clouds often mimic the shapes of the blanketed figures in the foreground, creating visual roadmaps for the viewers, further adding to the design, and narrative of each composition.



Photo Courtesy Jason Rothenburg

The desert is an endless source of inspiration for me. The dusty dirt roads are so mysterious and inviting. I have a hard time stopping to paint or photograph one location, because I am always curious to discover something new around the corner.

Monument Valley is one of the icons of the American West. I find it more interesting than the Grand Canyon. It is an amazing place to experience visually.

A musician is a person I can relate to. We are both creating something out of thin air and hoping someone out there connects to it.

Stylized Realism is a concept I came up with to describe my artwork. People often ask me "what style" of art I do. I always have a hard time describing it. So, I thought *Stylized Realism* sums it up. There is an element of realism, but the images are stylized and altered to strengthen my vision of the painting.

What history has taught me is that being peaceful and loving is the best path.



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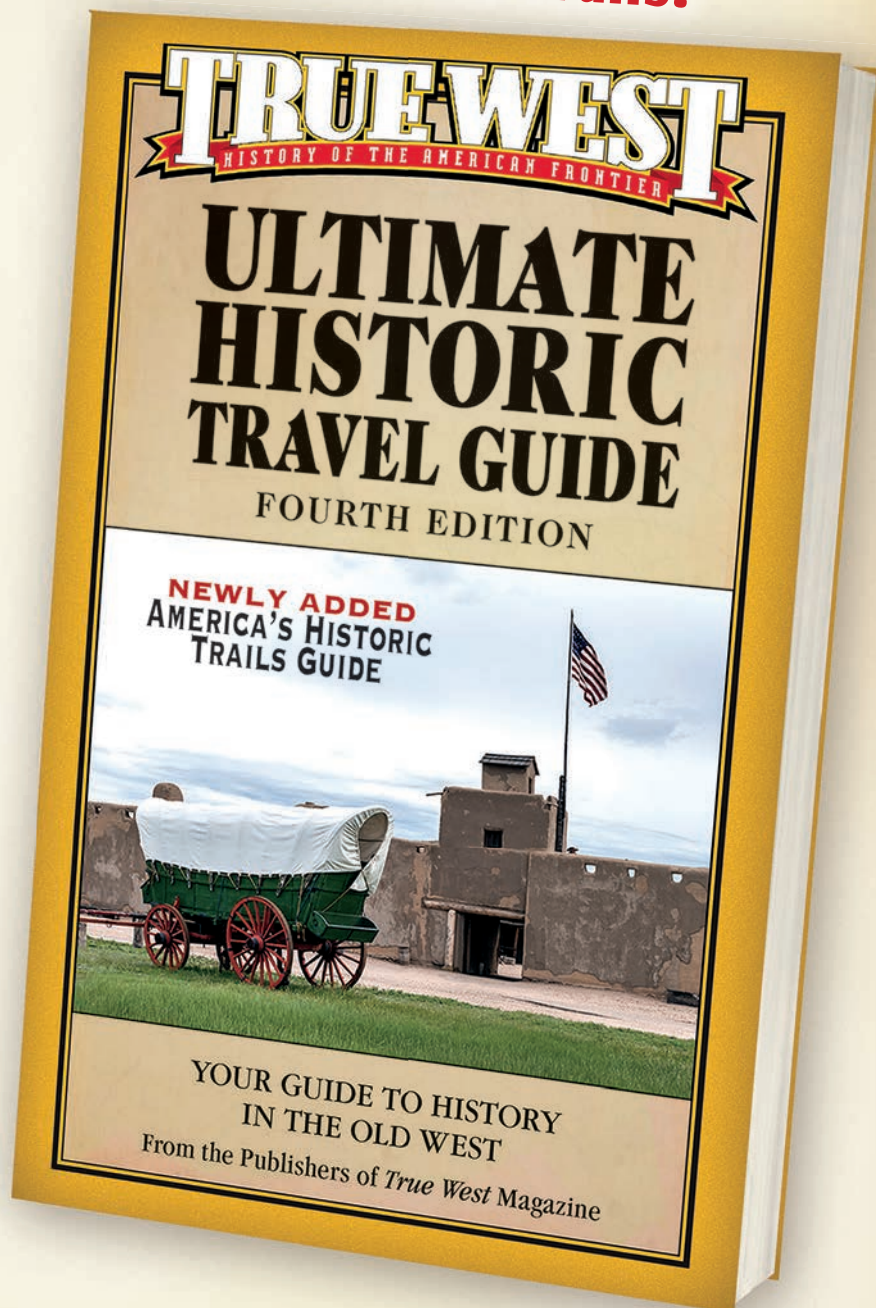
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