

OUR TOP TEN TOWNS FOR 2023

# TRUE WEST

HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN WEST



## The Day Jesse James Died

New Evidence  
Uncovered

By Mark Lee Gardner

PLUS:

James Beckwourth:  
Was He the Greatest  
Mountain Man?

Explore the  
Tennessee to Texas Trail  
of Davy Crockett

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FEBRUARY/MARCH 2023

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Casey Affleck in the  
best Robert Ford  
movie ever made (p. 32)

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Courtesy National Gallery of Art, 1965.16.25







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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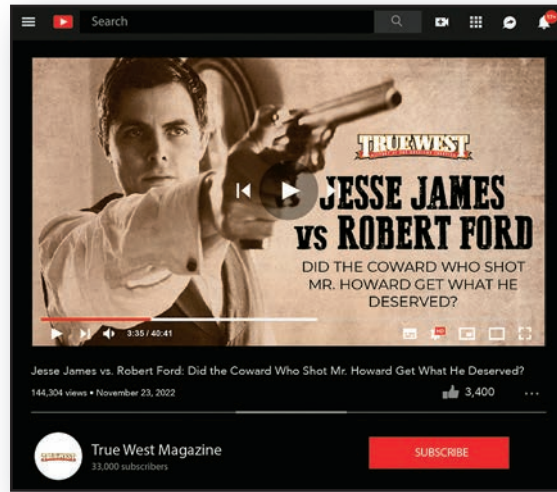
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**Bob Boze Bell**  
America's Western  
Storyteller

BBB tells the long-accepted version of Jesse James's death which spawned the new scholarship in this issue.

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# A TRULY MONUMENTAL ARCHIVE

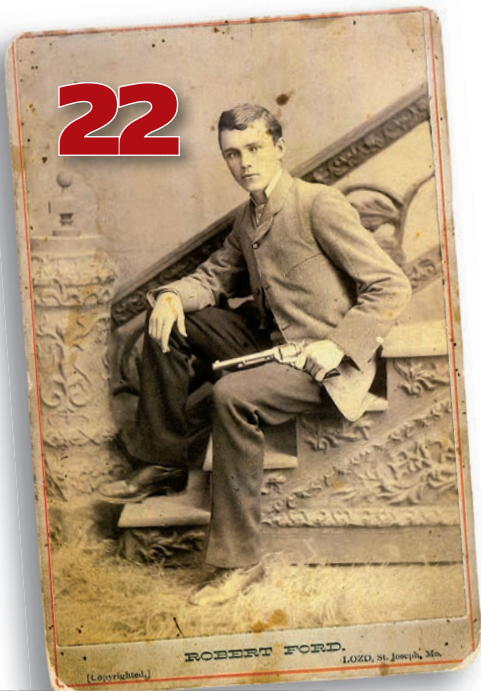
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**22 THE STRANGE AND MESMERIZING DEATH OF OUTLAW JESSE JAMES**

For over 140 years, Bob Ford's cowardly killing of Jesse James has fascinated historians seeking the truth behind the assassination.

—By Mark Lee Gardner

**34 RIDING WITH THE JAMES GANG**

For 70 years, *True West's* editors have been publishing stories about the legendary Missouri outlaws.

—By The Editors of True West

**36 JAMES BECKWORTH AND HIS TRAIL**

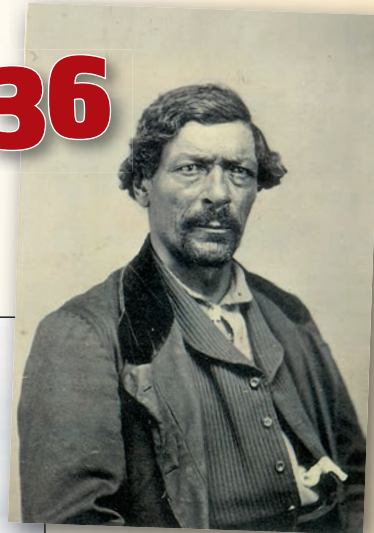
The legendary outlaw left a legacy of truth and fiction about his larger-than-life experiences as a trapper and trailblazer of the American West.

—By Terry Del Bene

**62 THE TOWNS TOO TOUGH TO DIE**

With foresight and determination, city leaders have worked hard for over a century to preserve our Old West history in the most famous Western towns.

—By Peter Corbett and The Editors of True West



Cover Design by Dan Harshberger

Photo of Casey Affleck as Bob Ford in "The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford" Courtesy Warner Bros.

COMPILED BY THE EDITORS OF *TRUE WEST*

## Old Vaquero Sayings

*"Tell me who you are with, and I will tell you who you are."*



### Quotes

"There are two ways of exerting one's strength; one is pushing down, the other is pulling up."

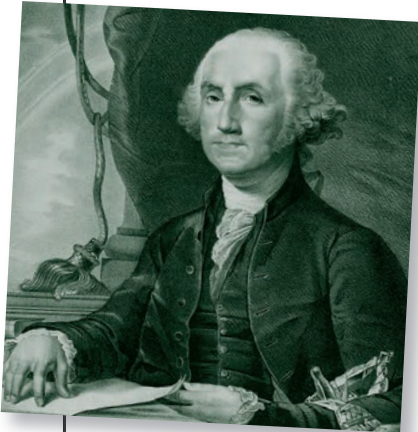
—Booker T. Washington

"I can't begin to tell you the things I discovered while I was looking for something else."

—Shelby Foote

**"Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth."**

—President George Washington, *Maxims of Washington*



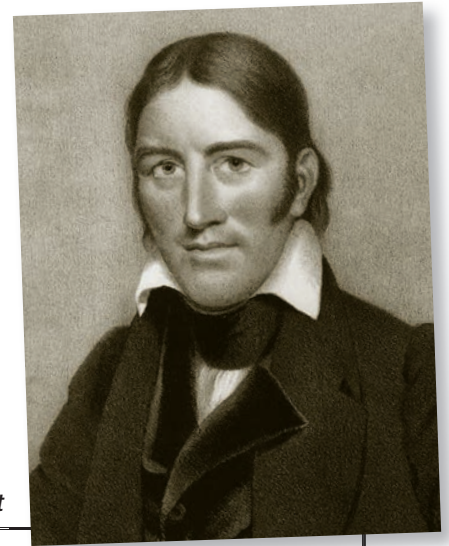
President George Washington  
Courtesy Library of Congress

"There's so much to say, but your eyes keep interrupting me."

—Christopher Morley

**"Fame is like a shaved pig with a greased tail, and it is only after it has slipped through the hands of some thousands, that some fellow, by mere chance, holds on to it!"**

—David Crockett



Colonel David Crockett  
Courtesy Library of Congress

"Venus, thy eternal sway  
All the race of men obey."

—Euripides, *Iphigenia in Aulis*

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right."

—President Abraham Lincoln, *Second Inaugural Address*

"I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his honour and that of his country, Victory or death."

—William B. Travis

"Pleasure's a sin, and sometimes sin's a pleasure."

—Lord Byron, *Don Juan I*

"One of the striking differences between a cat and a lie is that a cat has only nine lives."

—Mark Twain

"He must have had a magnificent build before his stomach went in for a career of its own."

—Margaret Halsey



CartoonStock.com

# One Legit Brit

*New research changes the long-accepted story of how Jesse James cashed in his chips.*

**W**e pride ourselves on telling the true stories of the historical West, and if you read “Classic Gunfights” in the last issue (January 2023), you know we told the long-accepted narrative about how Jesse James read in his morning newspaper (April 3, 1882) about a gang member—Dick Liddil—ratting out the gang, which led to the Ford brothers killing Jesse before he killed them.

Well, it turns out, part of that is not true.

Michelle Pollard, a researcher and fan of the Jesse James story, tracked down all the newspaper accounts of the Liddil surrender and turning on the gang, and learned that by April 3, it was old news; she could find no story about it in the April 3rd newspapers. This led us to reexamine the entire account, and we thought it a good idea to ask our friend and Jesse James biographer, Mark Lee Gardner, to revisit Jesse’s assassination and the weirdness surrounding it (page 22).

Ms. Pollard, who lives in Hailsham, Sussex, in England tells us she grew up watching Westerns with her “mum,” who loves Clint Eastwood. Michelle tells us, “In 2002, I had the opportunity to visit Missouri and did so thinking that would be the final part of the journey, but my interest just intensified, and here I am! Been back eight times! Never get tired of learning more about him and the events going on around him. Never tire of making new friends or going on road trips with firm friends and sharing what we find. Love it!”



**Michelle Pollard**

Researcher Extraordinaire

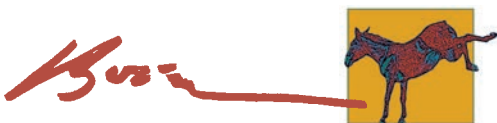
Photo by Liz Rains Johnson

## A Tight-Knit Community of Researchers Break the Story

Here is Ms. Pollard’s account of how she broke the story: “I live in the UK, so I began by asking fellow English Westerner, Robert J. Wybrow, if he had seen the newspaper. He said he had not.

I then posed the same question to my essential U.S. friends, all amazing researchers: Linda Gay Mathis, Liz Murphy, Chuck Rabas and the late Paul Saeli. None had seen, or could find, the relevant newspaper article, and all set about finding out why. I remember spending hours in the records offices of St. Joe and

Kansas City during a visit to Missouri, finding articles about Liddil’s surrender but all a week before I’d thought they’d be!”



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

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

## A SHARED TREASURE

We live in San Antonio, Texas. My wife was going through her father and mother's belongings after their deaths and found this postcard. Her dad passed away at 102 and her mother at 89. The card is addressed to J.C. Seeley, who is Jane Carolin Seeley. She was my wife's great-grandmother on her mother's side, born in Trinity County, Texas, in 1854. She is buried in Douglas, Arizona, having lived there most of her life. She passed away in April 1938. The card says he was "going on the stand" and probably be in Tombstone until around Tuesday, which we believe from the postmark would have been around April 28, 1914.

—Errol and Mollie Shipler, San Antonio, Texas

Thank you for sharing such a personal treasure. Historic photos and early 20th-century postcards of stagecoaches in Tombstone are rare. —SR



## LOADED FOR BEAR

Great pictures, but the "Loaded for Bear" photo on page 38 is reversed. No loading port and the saddle ring is on the wrong side. Also, Phil Spangenberg insists on referring to the .45-70 as a short range hunting cartridge, when it is the most common cartridge used in both Black Powder Cartridge Rifle Silhouette (500 Meters) and Creedmoor (1,000 yards) matches. Hitting the 6' x 6' target at 1,000 yards may not be hunting accuracy but hitting a steel ram at 500 meters certainly is.

—Michael Meacham  
Infinity Forge & Gunworks, Phoenix, Arizona

I'm well aware what the .45-70 cartridge is capable of in longer range shooting, however shooting at a steel plate or paper target at 1,000 yards, or a steel ram at 500 meters is quite different from shooting at a game animal, where a misplaced bullet could result in a crippled animal, or worse, wounded game that escapes into the wilds. I'm sure Mr. Meacham is aware that any humane hunter would not attempt to bring down an animal at such ranges, considering the arc-like trajectory of the .45-70. Even with telescopic sights, a certain "kill" shot would be guesswork with too much risk of a misplaced bullet at such distance. Target accuracy doesn't always translate into hunting effectiveness.

—Phil Spangenberg, Firearms Editor

## TEXAS RANGER FIREARMS

Just received my 70th year edition of *True West* magazine. Love it! I especially liked all the old photos. I did want to bring something to your attention, though. On page 63, in the photo of Texas Rangers, I see two rifles that are not '73 Winchesters. One is the '76 (fourth from left, bottom row) and what appears to be a Colt-Burgess carbine (third from right, top row.) You have to look real close to tell. Please correct me if I'm wrong.

—Rick Walls, Huntsville, Texas

With regard to the firearms in the Texas Ranger photo on page 63, you are correct, the man (third from right, top row) does indeed hold a Colt-Burgess carbine. However, you are probably referring to the Ranger in the front row (fourth from the left) who is holding an 1873 rifle with a pistol-grip stock. Being a longer-barreled rifle next to several carbines does tend to make it look like the larger 1876 model Winchester, nonetheless careful study of the photograph does reveal it to be the '73 model.

—Phil Spangenberg, Firearms Editor

## HIGH PRAISE

I thought the November 2022 issue of *True West* was one of the best I've read, primarily because of the variety of interesting pieces. I particularly liked the essays on gunslinger guns and the movies.

—Dr. Jim Vickrey, Montgomery, Alabama

The pictures in the January 2023 issue are magnificent. I could not stop looking at each one over and over. The facial expressions, the eyes, the hands, all told life stories. I am sharing my magazine copy with many friends. Thanks for what you do. You bring back the Old West to life.

—Al Harper, Durango, Colorado

We appreciate your enthusiastic encouragement and will keep trying to bring the Old West alive in the pages of *True West*. We have a great 70th year planned and hope to continue to meet your expectations. —SR

## TELLING THE TRUTH

I've just got to say, I admire the honest, tell it like it is (was), the good, the bad ugly truth and not just "filling in" to make copy or whatever it is you call it. I said that to say, my favorite part of the whole mag, is "Truth Be Known" and all the "Old Vaquero" sayings and other quotes—it sets up your publication and knocks it out of the park every time.

—Dr. C. Dewayne Chappell  
Church Hill, Tennessee

## CORRECTIONS

On page 92 in the January 2023 issue, the Best Living History Farm Museum, Grand Encampment, Wyoming, listing contained an incorrect description. It should have read:

Dedicated to the history of the Upper North Platte Valley, the Grand Encampment Museum is home to one of the finest collections of pioneer buildings in the state of Wyoming. A tour of the living history museum and the 12 historic structures tells the region's rich history of ranching, timber and copper mining. Visitors will also learn about day-to-day life and the cultural heritage of the Encampment area pioneers.  
[GEMuseum.com](http://GEMuseum.com)

# Packing It In

*Tom Horn's role in the Spanish-American War is uncovered.*

**T**om Horn was—is—a legend of the Old West. His exploits are unique in their variety: Army scout and translator, range detective, Pinkerton agent, cowboy, rodeo champion and hired killer. Many of his accomplishments are clouded by the lies and exaggerations that he himself spread.

His time in the Spanish-American War has been unclear. Some stories say Horn contracted yellow fever before he could leave Florida, preventing him from seeing action. Others say he became ill soon after arriving in Cuba; he was quickly evacuated back to the States.

Horn's own account portrays himself as a hero—and the facts seem to back that up. He signed up as a civilian packer, placing loads of food, ammunition and weapons on the backs of mules and leading them to the battlefield. The packers were often under deadly fire.

Horn was promoted to chief packer of the Fifth Corps just prior to departing for Cuba in late June 1898. That meant he was a paper-pusher. But when the troops and packers arrived at their destination, he was also forced into action. There were too few packers for what was needed, and Horn's talents were required.

So, for the next couple of weeks, as the American forces advanced against Spanish bulwarks, Horn was in the thick



Tom Horn served with distinction and valor in Cuba during the Spanish-American War. He caught yellow fever while fighting on the tropical island and returned to Wyoming to convalesce.

True West Archives

of the fighting. He was there at San Juan Hill, dodging bullets as he led his mules to resupply the troops. The U.S. soldiers took the hill on July 3 and immediately laid siege to Santiago, the last Spanish stronghold.

At one point, Tom Horn provided mules for Rough Rider colonels Theodore Roosevelt and Leonard Wood. They were on foot and needed new mounts.

Around the first of July, Horn caught yellow fever (as did so many Americans). He dropped 40 pounds in a matter of weeks. It didn't stop him. He still led pack trains, but he also tended to others who were sick. He continued serving through the end of the war on August 13 and for a few weeks afterward.

In early September, Horn and his packers were sent back to the States. He sought help for the yellow fever in various places. He ended up in Wyoming, staying with a rancher friend, where the final chapter of his life was about to be written.

Biographer Larry D. Ball says the truth is that Horn's service in Cuba was "one of the high points of his life." His work in leading the packers and packtrains was vital in providing the troops with much needed food and ammunition. In this case, Horn basically told the truth.



BY JANA BOMMERSBACH

# Let's Honor a Kick-Ass Arizona Woman

*Frances Willard Munds changed life in the brand new state.*

**A**rizona deserves a new tradition on election day: After voting, women could take their daughters and granddaughters to the State Capitol Mall to honor the woman who made it all possible. Men could bring their sons and grandsons to remind them how strong a state is that relies on both its men and women.

And they could all say “thank you” to a five-foot dynamo who astonished the nation by how she won the vote for Arizona women.

If Arizona Women’s History Alliance is successful, that tradition can start when a statute of Frances William Munds is placed on the Wesley Bolin Plaza—the first statute of an individual woman in the state’s sculpture garden.

They’re already halfway there, raising some \$144,000. And although Covid threw a monkey wrench for a while, the drive is back on track, with the generous offer from an anonymous donor to match the next \$70,000 they raise—enough to put them over the top.

“I look on her as a woman who was very strong and capable, who met obstacles that seemed insurmountable and kept going, who said ‘I can do hard things,’” notes Melanie Sturgeon of the Alliance. “She really understood the legislature was never going to give women the vote, so she took matters into her own hands.”

She did that through the initiative that was allowed by Arizona’s brand new constitution when it became a state on February 14, 1912. For its first election, on November 5, Munds gathered far more than enough signatures to put suffrage directly to the voters.



Sculptor Stephanie Hunter of Surprise, Arizona, won the commission to create the bronze sculpture of Frances Willard Munds, being cast at the Bollinger Atelier foundry in Tempe. With its base, it will stand ten feet tall and depict Frances walking forward, placing a ballot in a voting box and carrying a flag to honor those who came before her.

Photos of statue by Stephanie Hunter/Historic Photo of Frances Willard Munds Courtesy Library of Congress

She was betting the farm that male citizens would do what the legislatures had refused six times to do.

And, boy, was she right. Arizona shocked the nation and won a badge of honor forever. Suffrage passed in all 14 counties; 68 percent of the wonderful men of Arizona voted for it—the largest popular vote ever recorded anywhere in the nation. And Arizona joined the other Western states that had already given the vote to women—an astonishment to Eastern suffragettes who were still eight years away from national suffrage.



Then in 1914—the first time Arizona women had a chance to vote—Frances Willard Munds made history again, winning the state senate seat from Yavapai County. She was only the second woman in the nation to sit on a state senate. She sponsored bills to protect girls from prostitution and raise pension benefits for widows.

If she were here today, she’d probably want to repeat one of her slogans that led to such a victory: “Remember, Arizona women struggled as anxiously as men in building the state.”

Donations for the statue can be made to: [AZWomensHistoryAlliance.org](http://AZWomensHistoryAlliance.org).



**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*.

# THE LEGENDARY John Wayne

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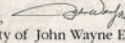
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John Wayne's legendary movie career included many heroic roles, including the tough, no-nonsense U.S. Marshall who would go to any length to bring his man to justice. Now you can wear a fitting tribute to this star of the silver screen with our ruggedly handsome *Legendary John Wayne Western Jacket*.

This custom design offered only by The Bradford Exchange is inspired by the same jacket John Wayne wore in his classic role as a U.S. Marshall. Masterfully crafted of Mohave-brown cotton canvas with cotton twill lining, the jacket provides the ultimate in comfort and classic western style. The boldly styled jacket features a Sherpa collar and a double breasted front button closure. Faux leather patch embossed with a U.S. Marshall's star along with John Wayne's signature is sewn inside, proof that you're a certified fan! The jacket has a roomy fit, 2 side flap pockets and an inside slip pocket with faux leather accent. It's a great way to honor the enduring spirit of a true American icon! Imported.

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**E22801**

BY STEVE FRIESEN

# American Indian Art and Artifacts

Collectors and sellers were both winners at two recent Bonhams auctions.

**C**reations by American Indians, past and present, figured greatly in two Bonhams auctions this past fall. On August 31, Bonhams had its Modern Native American Art sale with works by Fritz Scholder and other contemporary American Indian artists. Then on October 26 and 27, the company sold over 500 artifacts from the Robinson collection.

For collectors of American Indian artifacts, the sale of the Robinson collection was the most significant of the two auctions. Roy H. Robinson traveled from the Great Lakes to the Pacific Northwest during the 1920s and 1930s, compiling a collection that reflected American Indian artistry and craftsmanship. He was a connoisseur, and his practiced eye can be seen in the selections he made during that time.

Indian sketchbooks rarely come up at auction and the prices realized on four books at the Robinson sale reflected that. Created by Cheyenne and Kiowa prisoners at Fort Marion in the 1870s, the sketchbooks are important for their historical significance, their provenance and their artistic quality. The top seller at the auction had colorful drawings of life before and during imprisonment at the fort. It sold for \$353,175. The three other sketchbooks sold for \$138,375, \$138,575 and \$277,575.

Other artifacts in the collection ranged from clothing, blankets and everyday artifacts to weapons and jewelry. Like the sketchbooks, items reflecting an artistic hand sold for higher prices. Collector's notes from Robinson, establishing strong provenance, also added to the value of many of the artifacts. A



A fully beaded Lakota dress worn by Jenny Yellow Elk Woman, the wife of John Y. Nelson, scout and performer in *Buffalo Bill's Wild West*, sold for \$214,575.

fully beaded woman's dress, worn by the Lakota wife of John Y. Nelson, a scout and Buffalo Bill's friend, was expected to bring up to \$120,000 but brought \$214,575. A Crow shield, estimated to bring up to \$12,000, brought \$44,475. An early Navajo child's serape sold for \$176,776, nearly triple its estimated value, and a silver Navajo concha belt, at \$28,050, sold for five times its estimate.

Bonhams' Modern Native American Art auction featured several Fritz Scholder pieces, including *Dartmouth Portrait #8*, executed while he was artist-in-residence there in 1973. It sold for \$378,375. The auction also included jewelry, pots and paintings by other contemporary American Indian artists like Kevin Red Star.



Illustrating an American Indian man wearing a beaded buckskin jacket and peace medal, *Dartmouth Portrait #8*, created in Fritz Scholder's characteristic style, sold for \$378,375 at the Modern Native American Art auction.

The high prices of many of the materials sold at the two auctions, particularly those in the Robinson collection, not only reflect a growing demand, but set standards that will apply to future sales of American Indian art and artifacts.



All Images Courtesy Bonhams

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.



This Crow shield, with its unique stylized bird decoration, is attributed to Crow warrior Hunts the Enemy and brought \$44,475.



A Navajo child's serape from the Classic Period (1800-65), which was estimated to bring \$60,000, hammered down at \$176,775.

An 1876 sketchbook in the Robinson collection, made by Cheyenne prisoner Bear's Heart and documented in Karen Daniels Peterson's *Plains Indian Art from Fort Marion*, sold for \$353,175. Here are two out of 22 pages in the sketchbook.



Created during the reservation period in the latter 1800s, this fully beaded Comanche cradle in the Robinson collection sold for \$94,875.

## UPCOMING AUCTIONS

**March 15, 2023**

Arms & Accessories Day Firearms Auction #2071  
Rock Island Auctions (Rock Island, IL)  
[RockIslandAuctions.com](http://RockIslandAuctions.com) • 800-238-8022

**March 15-18, 2023**

Collectible Firearms & Militaria  
Morphy Auctions (Denver, PA)  
[MorphyAuctions.com](http://MorphyAuctions.com) • 877-968-8880

**April 8-9, 2023**

Western Fine Art Auction  
Scottsdale Art Auction (Scottsdale, AZ)  
[ScottsdaleArtAuction.com](http://ScottsdaleArtAuction.com) • 480-945-0225



A first phase Navajo silver concha belt (1860-80) with extensive collector's notes was expected to sell in a range from \$3,000 to \$5,000. It sold for \$28,050.



Kevin Red Star's *Tea Party*, painted in 1986 and contrasting contemporary and traditional tribal culture, sold for \$5,355 at the Modern Native American Art auction.

A coat worn by Lakota leader Chief Red Cloud when he sat for a portrait by Elbridge Ayer Burbank sold for \$31,875. The painting is in the collection of the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery.



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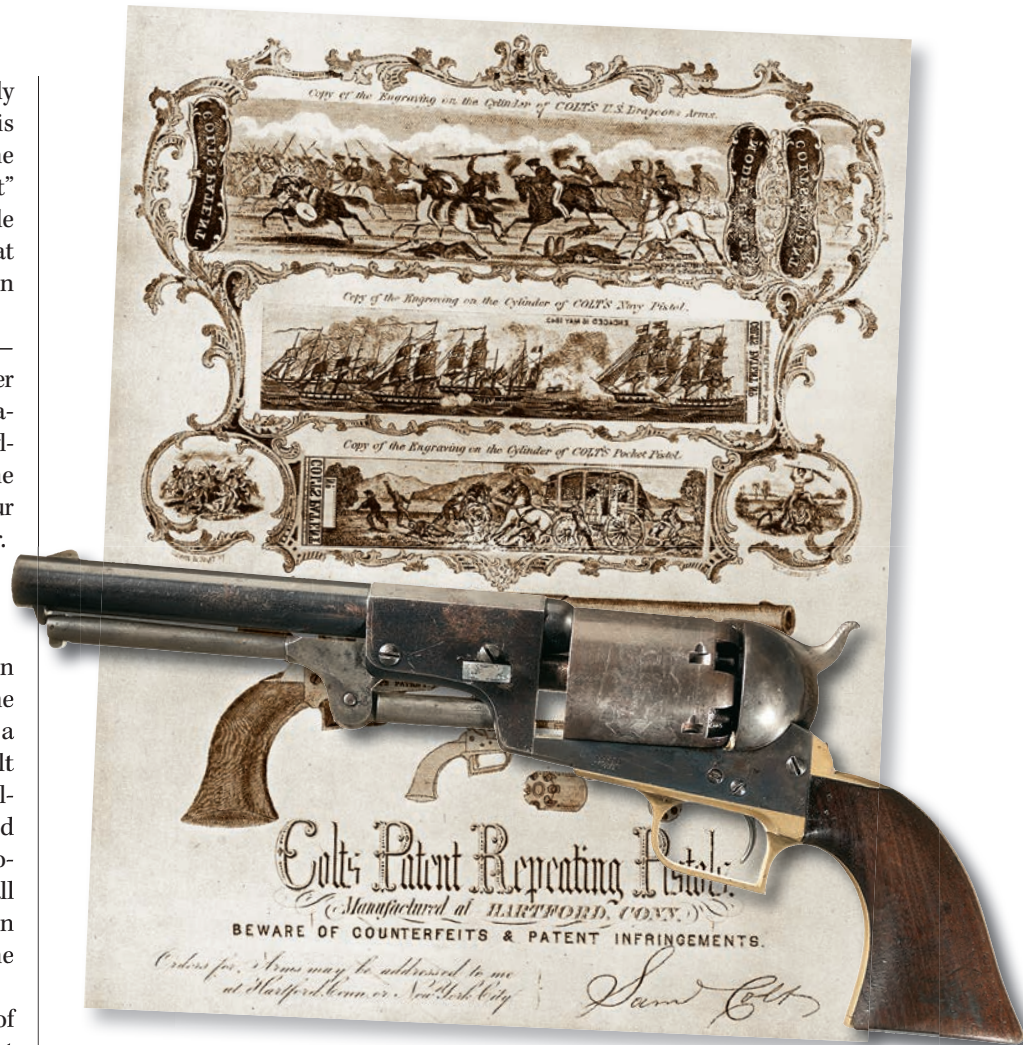
# Colt Cylinder Scenes: History or Promotion?

*More than just decoration, these roller-die-engravings were shrewdly added by Sam Colt to his revolvers to boost sales.*

Colonel Samuel Colt constantly thought of ways to promote his firearms and increase sales. One way was to place a sort of “advertisement” on each one, paying tribute to the people and events of historical significance that had used his revolvers—even though in some cases they weren’t really used.

Early Pocket and Belt Model Patersons—Colt’s first efforts, and the work of engraver Waterman Lilly Ormsby—depict variations of what is known as the Centaur cylinder scene (depending on the size of the revolver’s cylinder), which shows a centaur shooting two horsemen with a revolver. Colt’s larger No. 5 Holster Model Paterson bears an illustration of a stagecoach holdup, portraying revolver-armed passengers dispatching several highwaymen with larger-than-life revolvers. Despite the fact that stagecoach robberies were not a major problem at the time, Sam Colt played on the public’s fear of the possibility of such crimes, Colt cleverly adapted variations of this theme on the later-production 1848 Baby Dragoon Model, all 1849 Pocket Models, up through certain 1855 Root Sidehammer revolvers, and the 1862 Pocket Navies.

The massive .44 bore Walker model of 1847, the early .31-caliber 1848 Pocket Revolver and the later full-sized .44 Dragoons all utilized a panoramic view of what is popularly called the Ranger and Indian Scene. Here, mounted dragoons and Indians are engaged in a running skirmish, although the Baby Dragoon’s image is slightly abbreviated due to its smaller cylinder. This stirring roll engraving pays tribute to an actual fight between Texas Ranger Captain Jack Hays and his Rangers, and Comanche Indians. This portrayal was added in



This Colt advertising sheet of the early 1850s shows the factory roller-die-engraved scenes used on their various percussion revolvers, along with imagery of a 1st Model Dragoon. The pictures are depicted in reverse of how they actually appear on the revolvers, as if on the engraving plate. Shown with the broadside is a 2nd Model Dragoon Colt.

All artwork on the promotion was done by W.L. Ormsby.

Revolver courtesy Rock Island Auction Company, advertisement from True West Archives

honor of Hays and his Texians, whose effective use of Samuel Colt’s Paterson revolvers were so important in the development of his arms. Legend has it that the picture is supposed to represent the fight between Hays’ Rangers and

Comanches at Enchanted Rock, near present-day Fredericksburg, Texas, despite the rangers wearing stylish U.S. Dragoon-style uniforms, when, according to period accounts, they were most likely dressed in frontier civilian attire.

# Discover our Rich WESTERN Heritage



Located on the Wyoming State Fairgrounds in Douglas, the Wyoming Pioneer Museum is a must see for western history enthusiasts.

Among the collections you'll find stories of area cowboy Wild Horse Robbins and his adventures gathering wild mustangs and an outstanding collection of American Indian artifacts. Rodeo contractor Charlie Irwin's larger than life bib-overalls are always a favorite among children visiting the museum. Equally popular is the jackalope, created right here in Douglas, Wyoming!



The museum is also home to a tepee used in the movie *Dances with Wolves*. If you think tepee architecture is simple,

be sure to read the information on what went into building a tepee to ensure its stability and the escape of smoke from the apex.



Call 307-358-9288, visit us online at [wyo.parks.wyo.gov](http://wyo.parks.wyo.gov), or find the Wyoming Pioneer Museum on Facebook or Instagram for hours.



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Although stagecoach robberies were not a major problem at the time, Sam Colt played on the public's fear of the possibility of such crimes. This close-up view of an 1849 Pocket Model Colt revolver's cylinder reveals a portion of the Stagecoach Holdup scene. It depicts one bandit fleeing the coach, while another has been slain. The complete cylinder shows the coach's frightened horses, a damsel in distress inside and several other outlaws being chased off by a Colt wielding passenger.

Photo courtesy Arthur Tobias

Interestingly, Colt's 1851 Navy revolver, their 1860 Army Model and the 1861 Navy Model, all sport cylinder scenes of a naval conflict. If you look closely at the cylinders, you'll find the legend "Engaged 16 May 1843," along with the flags of the young Texas Republic and the early Mexican colors flying from the ships' masts. This date, along with the nautical imagery, represents a seaborne battle in which Texas's Commodore Edwin Ward Moore defeated a superior (in both number of ships and their size) fleet of Mexican warships—a crucial event in Texas's struggle for independence. This naval scene was another shrewd move on the part of Colonel Sam, since he was purposely catering to the Texas market that had been so prosperous for him in the past. Ironically, the opposing parties in this watery engagement never got close enough to each other to use any of Colt's revolvers or longarms. But why ruin the beauty of a thing with the truth?

Colt's Model 1855 Sidehammer Revolver, sometimes referred to as the Colt-Root Model, bore two different roll-engravings, depending on the particulars of each example. Sidehammer '55s with round cylinders and octagon barrels (those produced with fluted cylinders were not decorated) reveal what collectors refer to as the Cabin



Colt's revolvers depict Capt. Jack Hays' Texas Rangers in natty U.S. Dragoon-type uniforms, but in reality they were described in contemporary accounts as wearing a composite of "picturesque," rough frontier clothing. Hays's Texians likely looked more like famed Ranger John S. "RIP" Ford, seen here in buckskins and packing what appears to be a brace of holstered Colt Walker revolvers.

True West Archives

and Indian scene, showing an Anglo settler, armed with a brace of revolvers, warding off a band of Indians. Those Root revolvers made with round cylinders and round barrels were decorated with the familiar stagecoach holdup scene as found on the '49 Pocket Models and other smallish Colts.

Regardless of the facts that surround the imagery Colt used on his caplock revolvers, these factory roll-engraved cylinder scenes add flavor, interest and a bit of "history"—even if just for the sake of promotion. For further reading, the author suggests *Colt Cylinder Scenes, 1847-1851, The History, Process, Variations and Modern Copies*, by Arthur Tobias ([ColtCylinderScenes.com](http://ColtCylinderScenes.com)). ★

Phil Spangenberg has written for *Guns & Ammo*, appears on the History Channel and other documentary networks, produces Wild West shows, is a Hollywood gun coach and character actor, and is *True West's* Firearms Editor. He's also *True West's* "True West Westerner of 2022."

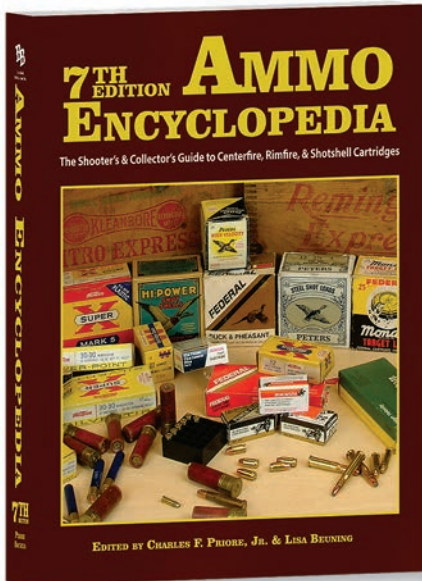


Photo courtesy of Blue Book Publications, Inc.

## BLUE BOOK'S 7TH EDITION AMMO ENCYCLOPEDIA

Blue Book Publications, Inc.'s *7th Edition Ammo Encyclopedia, The Shooter's & Collector's Guide to Centerfire, Rimfire, & Shotgun Cartridges* is the most comprehensive, up-to-date work available on current and obsolete ammunition. Edited by Charles F. Priore, Jr. and Lisa Beuning, the work's 928 pages now includes over 150 new and outdated cartridges.

In 8½ by 11-inch softcover format, it has updated Ballistic Tables and expanded Cartridge Type profiles, providing muzzle velocity, dimensions and the page numbers to corresponding cartridge profile pages. There's also an Expanded Trademark Index listing contact information for all current ammunition manufacturers and a full color section showing the actual size of all current centerfire, rimfire and shotgun cartridges, and more. Tailored for shooters, hunters and cartridge collectors, this *7th Edition Ammo Encyclopedia* provides the most up-to-date information to help you make the right ammunition choices for your particular needs.

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

BY MARK LEE GARDNER

# The Strange and Mesmerizing Death of the Outlaw Jesse James

For over 140 years, Bob Ford's cowardly killing of Jesse James has fascinated historians seeking the truth behind the assassination.

*"That man is Jesse James and we have killed him and don't deny it. We feel proud that we have killed a man who is known all over the world as the most notorious desperado that has ever lived."*

—Bob and Charley Ford

**F**ive months short of his 35th birthday, Jesse James had much on his mind. Money was tight. In fact, he was nearly broke. He had a wife and two children to support, and he knew they couldn't stay in their small, rented cottage on that high hill in St. Joseph, Missouri, forever. There was a farm in southern Nebraska he was keen on buying, and he'd written the man who'd advertised it in the newspaper, but the purchase would require cash on the barrelhead.

At the same time, Jesse James was itching for some action, for a return to the exhilarating days when he, Frank and the Younger brothers had relieved banks and trains of crisp greenbacks and double eagles. It'd been a long time since the notorious outlaw had made headlines, and no one reveled more in making headlines than Jesse. But he was about to fix that, or so he told Bob and Charley Ford, his "gang" at present.

Jesse's sights were set on the bank at Platte City, a county seat 30 miles south of St. Joseph. The murder trial of George E. Burgess, accused of killing his cousin, had begun that very day, April 3, 1882. Jesse told the Fords they would leave that night for Platte City and hit the bank the next morning, while court was



One of the only contemporary illustrations of Jesse's death to accurately show him in the act of straightening a picture instead of dusting it.

From *Jesse James: The Life and Daring Adventures of the Bold Highwayman and Bank Robber* (1882), Courtesy Mark Lee Gardner

in session. "It would be a fine scheme and would be published all over the United States as a daring robbery," Jesse boasted.

Bob and Charley Ford, 20 and 24 respectively, weren't the Youngers—not



At least three local photographers were allowed to photograph Jesse's corpse. This image is believed to have been made by Alex Lozo.

Courtesy Mark Lee Gardner

A Frank Leslie's artist created this portrait from a postmortem photo by Lozo, but he drew Jesse's eyes open, giving the outlaw an appropriately sinister look. Jesse's death made headlines across the country.

For the Week Ending April 22, 1862 Cover of "Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper" Courtesy Internet Archive



even close. And whether or not they had any real grit remained to be seen, but they could pull a trigger, and Jesse believed they were loyal or "true." He'd actually given the baby-faced Bob a handsome nickel-plated Colt .45 revolver. Even so, Jesse kept a close eye on the brothers and didn't allow them to get too far away. Of course, Jesse

watched everybody, Charley recalled, "even his own brother." Having a \$10,000 reward offered for one's capture and conviction will do that to a man.

That Monday morning was too warm for

Jesse's liking, and he said so. Bob and Charley then watched as Jesse took off his coat and boots and tossed them by a chair, leaving plainly visible the gun belt he wore and the two revolvers he always carried. Jesse next stepped up to a bureau and combed his hair in front of the mirror. Seeing his guns in the reflection, he told the boys he guessed he better take them off, as the front door was open, and folks passing by could easily see inside. In an instant, then, Jesse removed his belt and weapons and threw them on the room's only bed.

Despite all that was racing through the outlaw's mind that day, he suddenly became fixated on something quite inconsequential. Hanging high up on the room's east wall was a framed cabinet-sized portrait of his wife's niece, Nannie Mimms. Jesse looked up at the picture and remarked that Miss Mimms needed dusting. He picked up a feather duster and while cleaning the picture accidentally knocked it askew. With "an exclamation of pettishness," Jesse slid a chair under the portrait, stepped up on the chair, and grabbed hold of the picture.

As Jesse carefully slid the frame's wire hanger to center, he heard a shuffling of feet and a slight creaking of the wood floor behind him, quickly followed by the sound of rapid metallic clicks, a sound as familiar to the gunman as his mother's voice. Jesse started to turn his head....

## Selling the Legend

Today, the Jesse James "death house" sits on a small lot next to the Patee House Museum, just two blocks from its original location. Every day except



While local photographers made money selling death photos of Jesse James, Jesse's destitute widow entered into an agreement to sell photos of her children, Mary Susan and Jesse James Jr., with the outlaw and rare portraits of Jesse in life.

Images Courtesy Mark Lee Gardner

last home, including railroad magnate Jay Gould, who was surely ecstatic that Jesse and his gang would no longer be interrupting train travel. Gould bought one of the wood splinters, supposedly to have it incorporated into a watch fob. What better accessory for the robber baron who has everything

Sunday, the story of Jesse's murder is told and retold (through a recorded monologue) to anyone who has the four-dollar price of admission, a ritual that began almost immediately following Jesse's death. Back then, the white cottage's divorced owner, Mrs. Henrietta Saltzman, and her two young children served as the home's first tour guides, charging the curious two bits to see where the notorious outlaw met his fate. Bloodstained wood splinters from the floor—no bigger than a toothpick—were available for another 25 cents.

By June of 1883, 4,000 paying customers had visited the outlaw's



As the incredible news raced through St. Joseph that Jesse James had been killed in the city, a large crowd began to gather outside the white cottage of the man known to neighbors as Thomas Howard, but whom the Ford brothers insisted was the infamous outlaw.



**ROBERT FORD.**

[Copyrighted.]

LOZO, St. Joseph, Mo.

It was Bob Ford (left), just twenty years old, who conducted the negotiation with Missouri's Governor Thomas Crittenden to end Jesse James' career. In this photo taken shortly after the assassination, Ford poses with a Colt Single Action Army revolver, the same make and model documented as the murder weapon.

Images Courtesy True West Archives

Charley Ford (below) participated with Jesse and other gang members in the Blue Cut train robbery of September 7, 1881. He committed suicide in 1884, possibly because of his intense suffering from tuberculosis, or, as some speculated at the time, from remorse for killing Jesse James.



**CHARLES FORD.**

[Copyrighted]

*RF*

LOZO, St. Joseph, Mo.

than the dried blood of a fellow scoundrel?

Despite the closeness of the iconic event, though, misinformation about the assassination was already pushing aside the facts. The Saltzmans, for example, gladly pointed to a ragged hole in the front room's wall as the place where Bob Ford's fatal round passed after punching through Jesse's head. Indeed, Jesse's assassin himself had appeared at the house's door on May 29, 1882, and paid the quarter admission so as to settle a dispute "regarding the exact locality of the bullet hole in the wall"—at least

according to Mrs. Saltzman. (Much to Henrietta's chagrin, above Bob's name in the house register someone had drawn a coffin featuring a skull and crossbones on the lid, together with the words "Death you deserve." On the same line as Ford's signature, another incensed visitor had scrawled "Coward.")

And yet, the results of an autopsy performed on the dead outlaw, prominently published in the St. Joseph's *Western News* on April 6, 1882, revealed that the projectile had never left the outlaw's skull. The doctors discovered it "under the cranium behind the left ear." It was

flattened out, the newspaper reported, and tiny splinters of bone were embedded in the lead. This finding was confirmed 113 years later when Jesse's remains were exhumed and studied by forensic scientist James E. Starrs, who found no exit hole on the outlaw's skull.

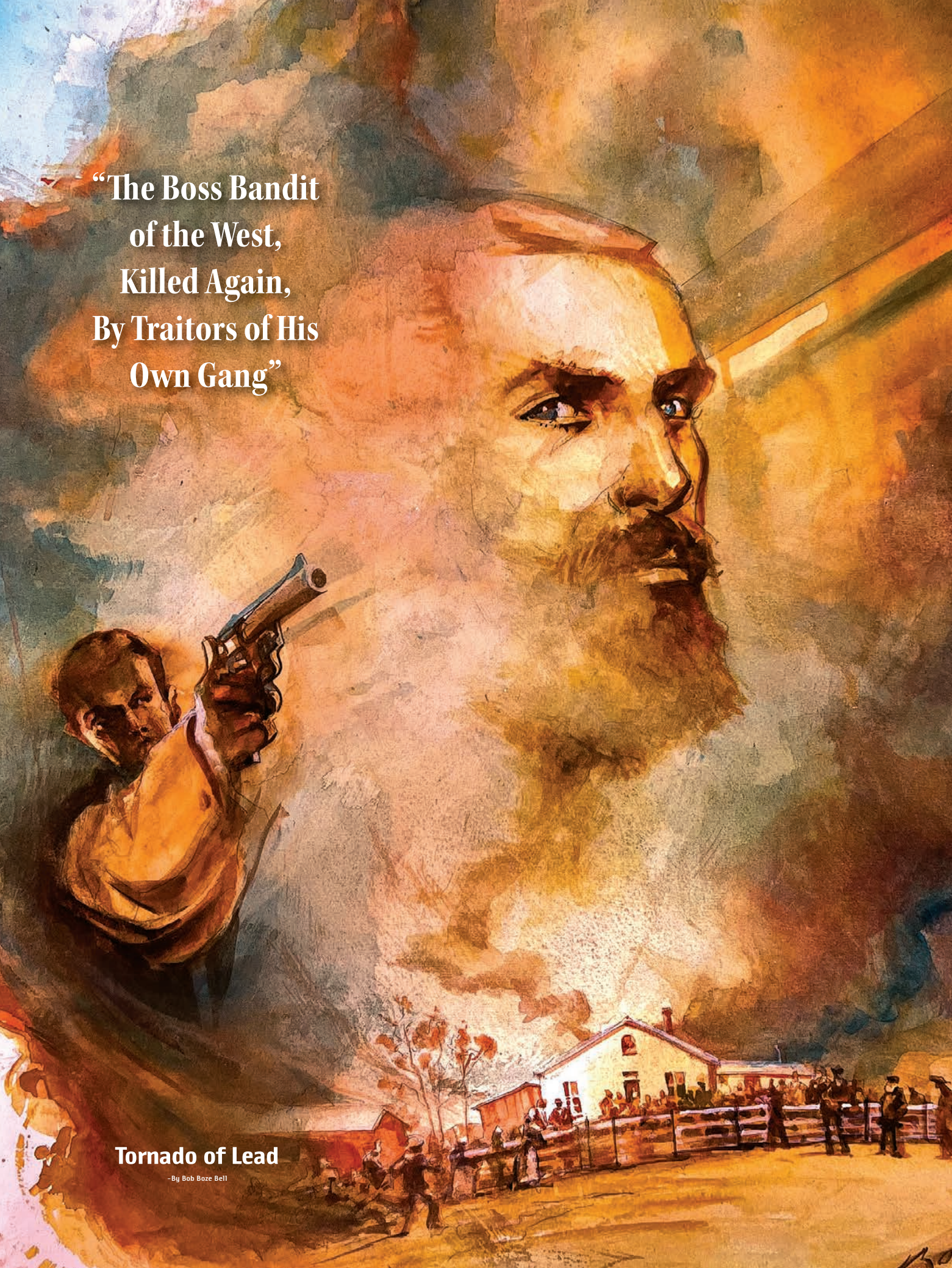
But what about that "ghastly wound" above Jesse's left eye, the one that many observers believed to be an exit hole? The gash is plainly visible near the left eyebrow in at least one of the photos taken of Jesse's corpse. The answer again comes from the autopsy: the cut was caused either by the outlaw's head striking the chair or it came from the

(Continued on page 28)

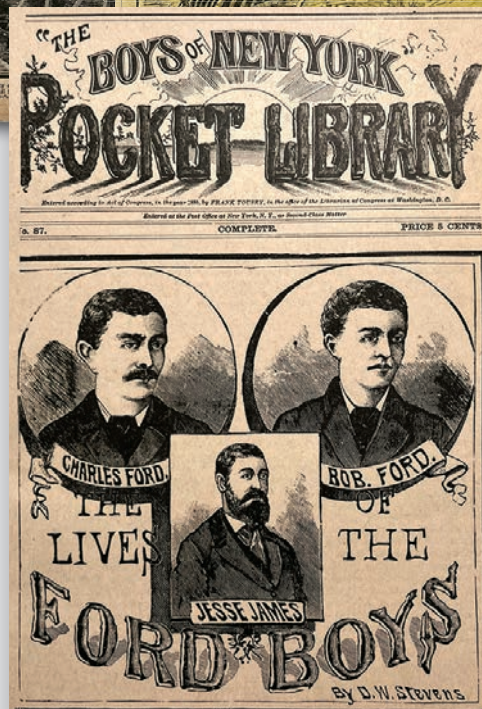
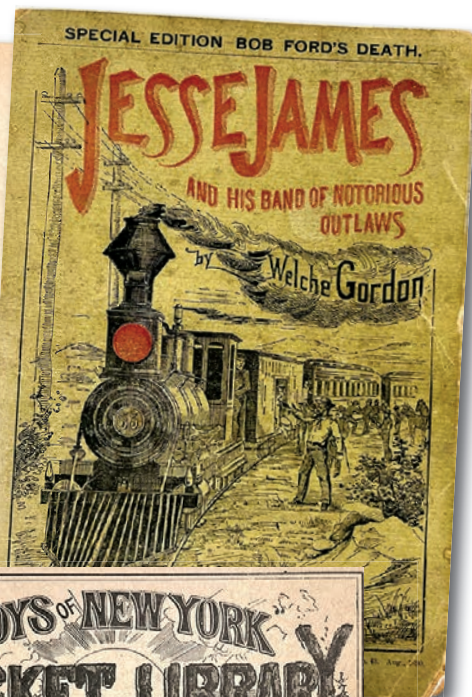
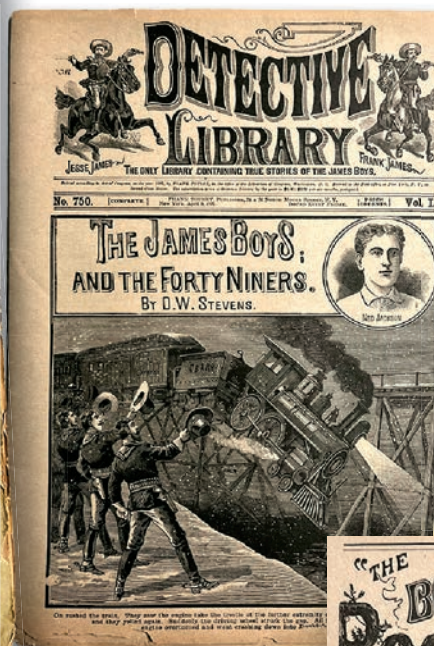
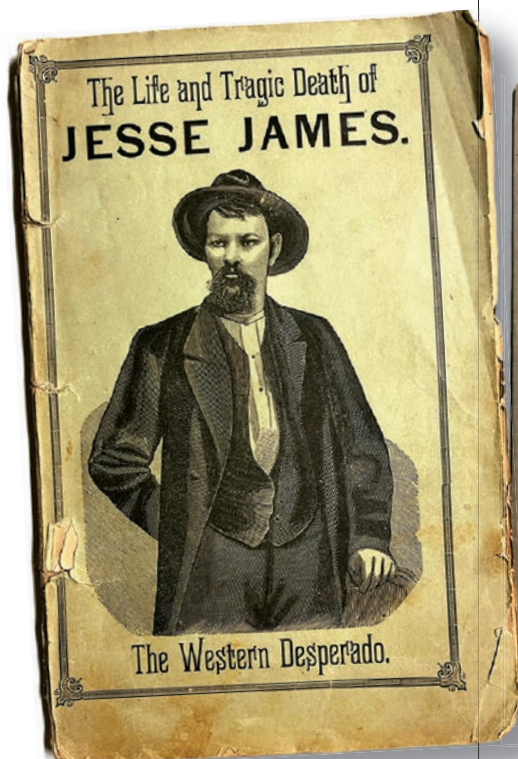
“The Boss Bandit  
of the West,  
Killed Again,  
By Traitors of His  
Own Gang”

**Tornado of Lead**

-By Bob Boze Bell







(Continued from page 25)

butt of a revolver. Did one of the Fords strike the prostrate outlaw to make sure Bob's shot had done its work? When asked this question at the coroner's inquest, Charley replied, "No, sir; nothing but the one shot."

## The Brothers Ford

The questioning had only just begun for Bob and Charley. When the pair later traveled to various cities reenacting their chilling deed in a play titled *The Outlaw Brothers*, they were obliged to tell their stories to local reporters once again. Several interviews, beginning on the day of the assassination, offer incredible firsthand information about the outlaw captain's death, but it's surprising how often what the Fords related has been overlooked or forgotten. The identification of the picture Jesse was straightening; the actual deal offered by Missouri's governor (\$40,000 for Jesse's capture, \$10,000 for the outlaw dead); the Fords' confession that they'd never considered taking Jesse alive; the gun Bob used to kill Jesse (see sidebar p. 30)—these and other fascinating revelations the brothers freely offered, albeit at times contradicting themselves.

And in a weird sort of irony, the world obtained its first real insights into

the flesh-and-blood Jesse Woodson James through the words of his killers. The brothers said "Jess" was a strong man with reflexes as quick as lightning. "He was so powerful," Charley said, "that he could throw me about just like I could a baby a week old." Jesse was also "the most interesting and entertaining man" they'd ever met, a sentiment shared by those in St. Joseph who'd gotten to know the outlaw as Mr. Thomas Howard.

The Fords told of how Jesse enjoyed recounting his numerous blood and thunder exploits (who else was he going to tell?), that he believed that God, whom the outlaw referred to as "The Master," had seen him through so many close calls that he felt he was somehow protected. Consequently, they said, Jesse saw no reason to make a career change.

## The Superstitious Family Man

It's because of the Fords that we also know that Jesse was a strangely superstitious man. They claimed that Jesse wouldn't start on a raid unless he'd seen the new moon clear. "He wouldn't look at it through a window or a tree," Charley recalled. "He wanted to see it

Jesse James and his gang were the subjects of hundreds of dime novels in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which, not unlike today's video games, were often accused of corrupting America's impressionable youth.

Covers Courtesy Mark Lee Gardner

Jesse's body was taken to William Sidenfader's undertaking establishment and put on ice, where hundreds of people came to view the dead outlaw. According to a reporter, many in the crowd were "ladies and school children, whose involuntary expressions of condolence with the unhappy fate of the outlaw, formed a touching tribute to the memory of the man." The tall man at center is City Marshal Enos Craig.

True West Archives



good luck if I can see the moon clear." Turns out Charley was right about the nonsense.

Jesse doted on his children, the Fords said, and became upset when his wife, Zee, tried to discipline them. And Jesse let it be known that he was intent on giving his kids a proper education, regardless of circumstances. It isn't a stretch to say that what the Fords witnessed inside the James household was close to how Zee James worshipfully described her husband within an hour or so of his murder: "a kinder hearted and truer man to his family never lived."

Not surprising considering Jesse's narcissistic nature, the Fords noted that the outlaw was a voracious reader of newspapers, eagerly scanning their pages for references to the infamous James gang. "He wanted to be talked about and would do anything to get his name in the papers," Charley said. "If the papers didn't say anything about him for some time, he'd write something to them himself."

## Exploding Myths

It was various Missouri newspapers published at the end of March that provided Jesse confirmation of something he'd long known—that former gang member Dick Liddil had turned himself in and was giving state's evidence. As the crackerjack British researcher and author Michelle Pollard has recently pointed out, this explodes the myth repeated by writers and filmmakers that Jesse first learned of Liddil's surrender the morning of April 3, supposedly prompting the Fords to kill Jesse before he killed them. Zee James, interviewed by a reporter as her husband's body grew cold in the front room, also well knew of Liddil's

betrayal, stating that "he has been a traitor for some time."

While it's clear that Jesse was quite the reader, one thing the Fords never saw him read was a book. In fact, when the majority of the contents of the little cottage were auctioned to support Jesse's destitute family, no books were among the items sold. However, there was one book among the personal possessions initially taken from the home by the city police. It was *Noted Guerrillas* by newspaperman and ex-Confederate John Newman Edwards, the Jameses' biggest defender and their pseudo press agent. Naturally, Jesse and Frank figure prominently among Edwards' "noted." (Jesse gave his son the middle name "Edwards" in honor of the newsman.)

## The Legend Will Never Die

Whether newspapers, DNA-soaked splinters, tawdry melodramas, dime novels, movies, tacky souvenirs or questionable artifacts, people have been selling Jesse James since even before he met his fate at the hands of the Fords. The outlaw sells, of course, because we continue to buy. Jesse's birthplace near Kearney, Missouri, and the death house at St. Joseph count visitors from all over the world. I

actually visit the death house annually. There's just something about standing in the room with the ghosts of Jesse and the Fords, imagining over and over in one's mind that iconic moment that's as emblazoned on the American consciousness as John Wilkes Booth's outstretched arm holding a derringer to Lincoln's head.

On a visit to the death house a few years ago, I spotted in the modest gift shop a box containing some old, weathered pieces of wood. The box had a paper sign on the front that read: "Original shingles from this house where Jesse James was killed. \$12.50." Could this really be? I thought. Can one still buy a piece of Jesse's house after well over a century? A piece, so to speak, of the legend itself? I took a picture of the box—and then quickly got out my wallet.



A native of Missouri, **Mark Lee Gardner** is the author of the award-winning book *Shot All To Hell: Jesse James, the Northfield Raid, and the Wild West's Greatest Escape* (William Morrow). His most recent work is *The Earth Is All That Lasts: Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, and the Last Stand of the Great Sioux Nation* (Mariner). He lives with his family at the foot of Pikes Peak.

Despite the inscription on this Smith & Wesson, Bob Ford shot Jesse with a Colt.

True West Archives

## The Smoking Gun: Where is Colt #50432?

One enduring—and needless—controversy stemming from the assassination of Jesse James centers on the gun that Bob Ford used to kill the outlaw. Was it a Colt or a Smith & Wesson? The *St. Joseph Western News*, in its issue published on the day of the shooting, stated that Bob's weapons consisted of "one forty-five caliber Colt's and one forty-one caliber of the same make, but double action." As for which of those arms Bob used to kill Jesse, the *St. Joseph Daily Gazette* of April 4 reported that Bob used the .45 Colt.

And then there's the striking photograph of a seated Bob Ford taken by St. Joseph photographer Alex Lozo on April 6 in which Ford is holding a Single Action Army Colt, which appears to be nickel-plated.

The above would seem to settle the matter, but Charley Ford did create some confusion for historians when, at the coroner's inquest held on April 5, he was quoted as saying his brother used a Smith & Wesson. Whether Charley was misquoted or simply mistaken matters little, for Charley wasn't the one who shot Jesse. And brother Bob, in addition to not having a Smith & Wesson on his person when he fired the fatal shot, soon made quite clear the make and caliber of the murder weapon.

By May, 1882, Bob and Charley were still waiting on the promised reward for Jesse's demise. They needed money, and it seems Bob struck on the idea of getting a loan using the famous gun as collateral. However, former City Marshal Enos Craig still retained the weapons and other property of the Fords. After some prodding, Craig finally turned over the brothers' property on May 2. The receipt from Craig, published in the *St. Joseph Herald*, lists one Colt .45 and one Colt .41, the same weapons identified

as belonging to Bob. Then, in Kansas City the next day, Bob signed the following affidavit in front of Justice of the Peace J. C. Ranson:

*Personally came before me, J.C. Ranson, justice of the peace in and for the county of Jackson, Robert N. Ford, who, having been by me duly sworn, deposes and says that the pistol No. 50432 Colt .45 caliber here shown is the same that he, Robert N. Ford, used to shoot and kill Jesse James, at the City of St. Joseph, on the 3d day of April, 1882.*

Ford's sworn statement was published in the *Kansas City Times* of May 5, 1882, which added that the murder weapon was presently on display at C. Blitz's "Famous Loan" office. Bob soon paid off the loan and retrieved his gun, for he used it on stage in the following months when reenacting with his brother their dastardly—or heroic—act.

Unfortunately, the above historical information, readily available to any serious researcher, didn't figure in the 2003 sale of a .44 caliber Smith & Wesson revolver touted as the gun that killed Jesse James. That weapon brought an astounding \$350,000 at an Orange, California, auction. Its history is traced to Corydon F. Craig, a theater manager and the son of Enos Craig. Corydon turned up in Baltimore, Maryland, with the Smith & Wesson in 1904, claiming it was the Jesse James murder weapon. According to the tale Corydon spun, Ford had given the gun to his father in appreciation for the kindness shown by the marshal while the Fords were in jail.

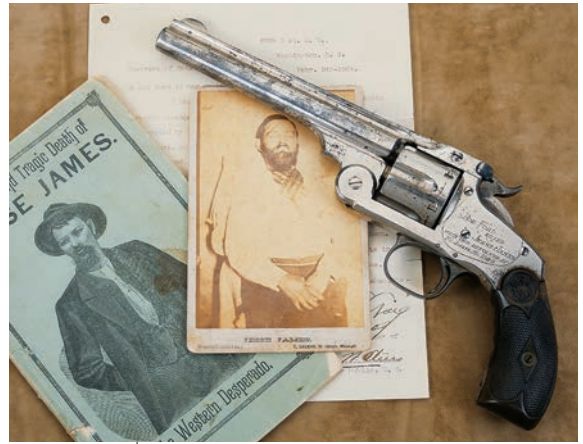
Corydon found a ready buyer for the revolver, who promptly sent it off to the Smith & Wesson factory to have it engraved with an inscription identifying

it as the gun that killed Jesse James. Naturally, the inscription gave the gun an air of authenticity to the unsuspecting. The revolver remained largely out of sight for several decades until it came up for auction in Lewes, England, in 1993, where it sold to an American named J. McGee for \$185,493. The individual who dropped \$350,000 for the spurious revolver ten years later chose to remain anonymous, but their purchase surely set a world record for the highest price paid for a .44 caliber paperweight.

And what of the actual gun that killed Jesse James, the Colt SAA #50432? In 1891, Bob Ford got into a face-to-face shootout with a man named J. D. Harden in a Walsenburg, Colorado, saloon. Bob was wounded in the foot, while Harden took rounds in his shoulder and hand. The *Rocky Mountain News* reported that Bob used the same gun he'd used to kill Jesse, which is certainly possible, although the *News* gave an incorrect caliber for the weapon. The *News* also quoted the town marshal as saying he intended to keep the weapons of both men as "mementos of the almost fatal tragedy."

Whether or not the revolver Ford blazed away with in Walsenburg was his Colt #50432, it seems to be the last time Ford is mentioned as possessing the gun that killed the Missouri outlaw. Where it went from there is unknown. If not discarded or destroyed, Colt SAA #50432 is still out there, perhaps in a private gun collection, a museum or maybe even someone's dresser drawer, waiting to be discovered. Its value today could be in the millions, so start looking!

—M.L.G.



# THE JESSE JAMES AUCTION

On April 10, 1882, a week after Jesse's murder, a good portion of the James family's personal property, mostly household goods, was auctioned at the hilltop cottage to benefit Jesse's widow and two children. The *St. Joseph Herald* reported that the sale drew a large crowd, but it was largely composed of "lookers." With few bidders, then, items went cheap. The total from the sale was a paltry \$117.65. Below is the partial list of the items sold as published by the *Herald*, along with the amount each piece realized.

- Copper bottom boiler, .25
- Coffee pot, .10
- Chair, \$2.25
- Dripping pan, .50
- The coffee mill which little Jesse Edwards James was using under instruction of the Ford boys when they shot his father, \$2.00
- Milk pail, .50
- Coffee boiler, .90
- Tea kettle, \$1.50
- Coal hod, with coal carried in by Jesse just before he was shot, \$1.00
- Wash tub, .75
- Can of kerosene, .50
- Jug of molasses, \$1.25
- Jesse James' dog, \$15.00
- Rolling pin, .50
- Sieve and contents, cans, etc., \$1.00
- Skillet, \$1.00
- Skillet, .50
- Griddle, .50
- Iron pot, .50
- Iron pot, .50
- Butter dish, \$2.00
- Tin basin, .25
- Sugar bowl, \$2.25
- Pitcher, \$1.00
- Tin plates, .50 each
- Three saucers, .25 each
- Vegetable dish, \$1.00
- Small dish, .75
- Large platter, \$1.50
- Jar of lard, .50
- Washboard, .25
- The wash basin that Jesse James used a few minutes before he was shot, \$4.50

- Three pie plates, .50
- Half sack flour, \$1.00
- Vessel, \$1.00
- Zinc, .50
- Lot of cans, .25
- Table, \$5.00
- Scrub brush and broom, .25
- Brush used by Jesse James in dusting a picture at the time he was shot, \$4.50
- Baby's high chair, .75
- Chair, \$3.25
- Chair, \$1.00
- Revolver, with a history in connection with the Blue Cut robbery, \$17.00
- Pair of gloves belonging to Jesse, \$2.00
- Mattress, \$2.00
- Mattress, \$1.50
- Valise purchased by Jesse James in Baltimore and carried by him ever since, \$15.00
- Bedstead, used by Jesse and his wife, \$7.00
- Jesse James' pocket knife, \$3.00
- Individual salt, .25
- Bedstead occupied by the Ford boys, \$3.75
- Bloody carpet, \$3.50
- Leather strap from the Blue Cut robbery, .25
- Cook stove, \$5.00
- Heating stove, \$4.00
- Kitchen table, \$1.25
- Bureau, \$10.50
- Jesse James' gold watch was offered, but there was only one bid, \$50.00, and the watch was not sold.

—M.L.G.

## GOOD-BYE, JESSE

The Last Effects of Jesse James Sold at Public Auction.

One Victim of His Daring Exploits Officially Heard From.

The auction sale of the household effects of Jesse James, still remaining at the house, 1318 Lafayette street, took place yesterday afternoon. About \$12 was realized for the widow and children by their attorney Mr. R. G. Haire, on Sunday afternoon, by charging male visitors to the house in which the tragedy occurred an admission price of 10 cents each, ladies free. The crowd yesterday afternoon was enormous. The bidding was spirited and a handsome sum was realized.

At two o'clock George P. Dixon mounted the stand and began the sale. While many were prompted to buy the articles offered from a plain practical standpoint of realizing usefulness from them, the majority invested their funds chiefly for the satisfaction of a taste for relics associated with the memory of the departed guerrilla. The following is a list of the goods sold together with the sums they brought:

THE GOODS SOLD.	
Boiler.....	25
Coffee pot.....	10
Chair.....	2 25
M. P. Cloude.....	1 00
Baking pan.....	1 00
Granville Atkins.....	2 00
W. A. Masterson.....	30
Baking pan.....	50
Milk pail.....	1 00
Coffee pot.....	1 50
Tea kettle.....	1 50
W. W. Abbot.....	1 00
Coal scuttle.....	1 00
Dr. Mailan.....	75
Wash tub.....	75
Josie Farrol.....	50
Plate.....	1 50
Platter.....	50
Dish.....	50
Axie grease (no bid).....	50
Jar of lard.....	25
Plate.....	50
Rickie jar (no bid).....	25
Wash board.....	25
Wash basin.....	4 50
Mrs. Hosea.....	50
Pie plates.....	50
one fourth flour.....	1 00
Chamber.....	1 00
Mr. Claudias.....	75
Oil can.....	1 25
Jug of molasses.....	1 50
Dishpan.....	1 00
Rolling pin.....	1 00
To Mr. Hildebrand.....	1 00
Sieve and contents.....	1 00
To Mr. Hope.....	1 00
Skillet.....	50
Griddle.....	50
Iron pot.....	50
Butter dish.....	60
Basin.....	2 00
Sugar bowl.....	20
W. B. Johnson.....	2 25
Pitcher.....	1 00
White plate.....	50
White plate.....	50
White plate.....	50
White plate.....	50
White plate.....	50
White plate.....	50
White plate.....	50
Saucer.....	50 1
Dish.....	25
Dish.....	1 00
Saucer.....	75
Carpet.....	25
Cook stove.....	3 50
Heating stove.....	4 00
Adam Kreutzge.....	4 00
Baking pan.....	50
Bureau.....	10 50
J. Burack.....	1 25
Gold watch, (offered).....	50 00
Rolling pin.....	25
Cans.....	25
Breakfast table.....	25
Mr. Hope.....	5 00
Broom and brush.....	25
Dusting brush.....	4 00
Easy chair.....	75
Chair.....	3 25
Mrs. Alderman.....	1 00
Chair.....	1 00
Dr. Mailan.....	1 00
Chair.....	1 00
Litticjohn.....	1 00
Smith & Wesson revolver, donated by a friend to whom Jesse James presented it seven days after the Blue Cut robbery.....	17 00
Dr. Busey.....	2 00
Gloves.....	2 00
Traveling bag.....	10 00
Dr. Mailan.....	10 00
Pocket knife.....	2 00
Dr. Busey.....	2 00
Mattress.....	2 00
Mattress.....	2 00
Bedstead.....	7 00
Bedstead.....	3 75

While some of the trunks brought their full value even as *relics*, some articles did not bring their intrinsic value, as the bedstead and bureau. About \$12 was realized and turned over to the widow. A gold watch, purchased and paid for by Jesse James, valued at \$50, still remains in the hands of Mr. R. J. Haire, and will be for sale within the next two weeks. A written guarantee that the watch is not stolen property will be furnished to any purchaser from the party who sold it to Jesse.

"The St. Joseph Weekly Gazette" (St. Joseph, Missouri), April 13, 1882, 13 Apr 1882, Courtesy Newspapers.com

THE ROBERT FORD MOVIE

# The Dirty Little Coward Gets His Due

*“I remember telling Ron once that I considered The Assassination of Jesse James as by far the best Jesse James movie ever made. He replied that he thought of it not as a Jesse James movie but as a Bob Ford movie.”*

—Mark Lee Gardner, author of *Shot All to Hell: Jesse James, the Northfield Raid, and the Wild West’s Greatest Escape*

We recently got a chance to catch up with the brilliant writer Ron Hansen, who created the book that launched the movie that many of us consider the best Jesse James movie—and some of us maintain—the best Western, *ever*. Hansen has long claimed his movie is really not a movie about Jesse James, but about Robert Ford. Here are selected comments he made to us about his classic film *The Assassination of Jesse James by The Coward Robert Ford*:

**TW:** Did Angelina Jolie influence Brad Pitt’s decision to star in the film?

**RH:** “I’m told that when Brad Pitt decided to do my Jesse, at Angelina Jolie’s urging—she’s claimed it’s his finest acting performance—Brad knew the first thing Warner Bros. would change was its title, so he had it written into his contract that my title would stay. And I also wanted it to reflect the cowardice that the media assigned to Bob Ford ever since 1882. Some reviewers were troubled by my use of the term “assassination,” since they thought it only applied to the killings of political figures, but readers of *True West* are aware that any shocking murderer was called an assassin back then. I liked the 19th-century idea of incorporating all the major incidents of a book into its title, such as the now-cropped front-page title to Pat Garrett’s *The Authentic Life of Billy the Kid*, with its full, newspaper-like description for the uninformed of who Garrett and Billy were.

**TW:** Was there actually a four-hour cut of the film?

**RH:** “I’ve heard that cinematographer Roger Deakins loved a four-hour cut of the film, yet [director Andrew Dominik] denies such a cut ever existed. But I would not be surprised if Andrew’s original preview was far longer, because I saw a lot of fascinating scenes in the dailies that finally didn’t get incorporated. I also saw a cut that was 2:15, but too many intricacies were lost.



The film *is* intentionally slower than we’re used to, both to increase suspense and, as director Ang Lee noted in defense of the pacing, to more fully represent an ambling, no-hurry sense of time in the 19th century.

**TW:** Did the film succeed financially at the box office?

**RH:** “My information on the financials is not even as lofty as second-hand, but I’ve heard that it cost \$30 million to film, even though Brad took far less than his going rate for his role in it. Warner Bros. seems to have made the decision not to push it, so it generally only lasted in a theater for a week before the copy was hustled off to another venue. The film did far better in England and elsewhere

In a scene with Casey Affleck as Bob Ford (below, left) and Brad Pitt as Jesse James (below, right), Jesse learns for the first time of Dick Liddel's surrender, causing the Ford boys to fear for their lives and kill the outlaw. But as new research by historian Michelle Pollard has revealed, Jesse had known of Liddel's surrender for days prior to the assassination.

Courtesy Warner Bros.



Casey Affleck played Bob Ford, garnering an Oscar nomination.

Courtesy Warner Bros.

internationally, and it's frequently available on streaming channels, so I suspect it's earning back the cost to film it, even if it hasn't been a big score for the studio. Robert Altman's *McCabe & Mrs. Miller* fell flat in 1971, despite having Warren Beatty and Julie Christie in the leads, but a decade later, Altman said he was shocked to find out his film was considered a classic, an opinion shared by both Andrew Dominik and myself.

**TW:** Did you like the pace of the final cinematic release?

In a fitting cameo, author and screenwriter Ron Hansen (center, with bowler hat), appeared as a journalist in the film.

Courtesy Warner Bros./Ron Hansen



**RH:** "I was in a bookstore where employees were carrying boxes of the film's DVDs and one stocker asked another what the movie was like, and his pal disdainfully and ironically said, 'It's like reading a book.' All the voice-over narration and, with just a few exceptions, the dialogue are indeed from my novel. The poetry in it is what attracted Andrew to the project, and probably Brad and Casey Affleck, whose stunning performance as Bob Ford made him a finalist for the Academy Award."

**TW:** Did Jesse James embrace his death? Was it, in fact a suicide?

**RH:** "Was Jesse James embracing his death? I do not think it was suicide, but he was a fatalist who'd seen the Younger

Gang get wiped out in their Northfield, Minnesota, raid, seen others betray him and recognized he'd chosen a perilous profession and was now surrounded by wannabe miscreants he neither particularly liked nor trusted. So, 1882 was a year of cat-and-mouse in which Jesse James became a gangster consolidating his terrain and eliminating even potential traitors. He was ingratiating but disingenuous in giving Bob Ford the six-gun that would become the weapon in his own murder. He was pretending he completely trusted the kid in order to make him and Charley less wary. And then he operated by his own ethical standard, offering himself in performance as a defenseless, gunless friend who suddenly felt the need to dust a picture of his niece. Were they too cowardly to kill him then, Jesse felt he had the fair's-fair permission to kill them later."



# Riding with the James Gang

For 70 years, *True West's* editors have been publishing stories about the legendary Missouri outlaws.

In the summer of 1953, *True West's* founding editor and publisher Joe A. Small published issue #1, volume 1 of *True West*. In that first issue, Jesse and Frank James made their first appearance in the magazine. Eugene Pawley's feature "He Outrobbed Jesse James" compared the career of Jesse and Frank James to little-known outlaw Bill Miner, who supposedly robbed his first stage with a cap and ball pistol in 1859 and robbed his last train 52 years later...with automatic pistols. We just might have to look back at the life and times of Bill Miner again!

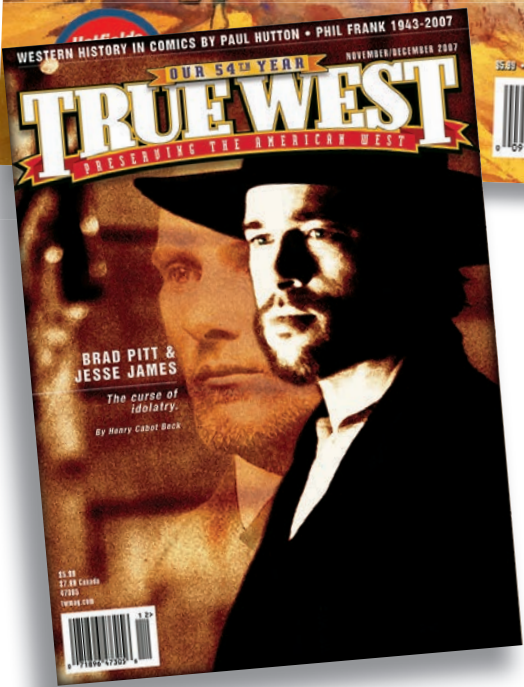
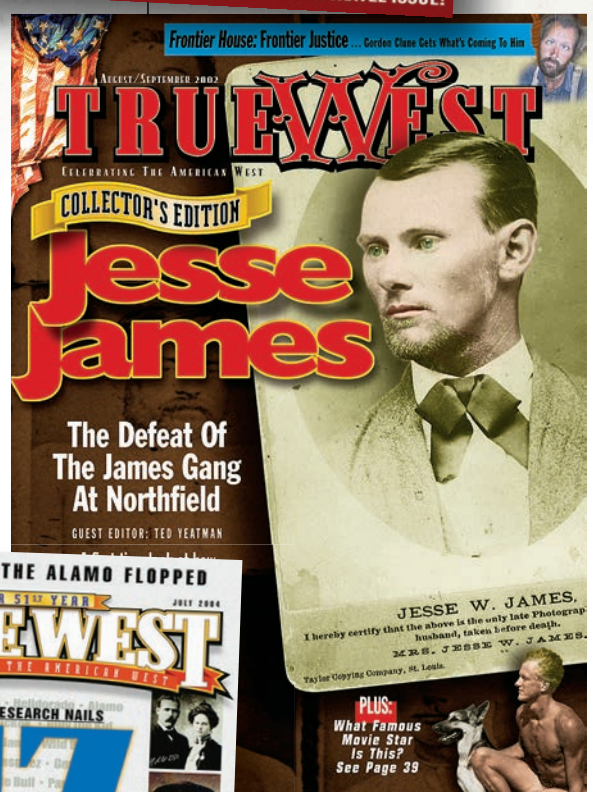
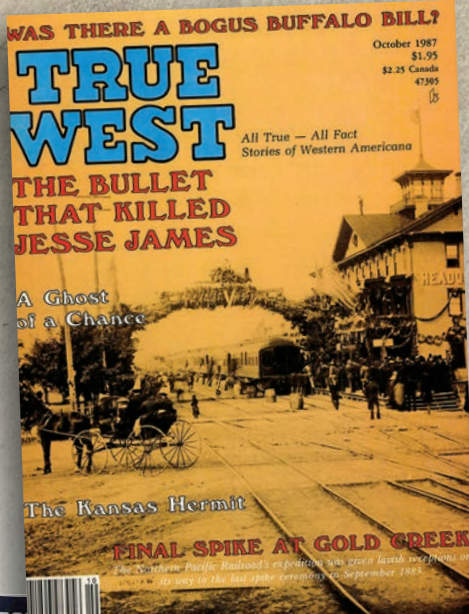
In April 1955, *True West* published the first Jesse James cover (above) asking readers "IS This, Or Isn't It, from left to right, Cole and Bob Younger, Frank and Jesse James? See page 5" It's obviously not them, but no doubt the



interest in rare and undiscovered photos of Old West characters is still a hot business.

Seventy years later, Jesse James is still one an iconic legendary figure in Old West history and a favorite of our editors and readers. So much so, that the editors of *True West* believe he is a worthy cover subject in our anniversary year because of Michelle Pollard's new and revelatory research on the newspaper reports of Dick Liddle's surrender (p. 11, p. 29) which upends over a century of writing and research on Jesse James's state of mind on April 3, 1882. We are fortunate to have the most preeminent Jesse James scholar, Mark Lee Gardner, interpreting this new research (p.22).

Here is a look back at the best of the best Jesse James covers from *True West* Archives:



BY TERRY A. DEL BENE

# James P. Beckwourth and His Trail

THE LEGENDARY  
MOUNTAIN MAN  
LEFT A LEGACY  
OF TRUTH AND  
FICTION ABOUT  
HIS LARGER-  
THAN-LIFE  
EXPERIENCES AS  
A TRAPPER AND  
TRAILBLAZER OF  
THE AMERICAN  
WEST.



“We reached the American Valley without the least accident, and the emigrants expressed entire satisfaction with the route... A northern route had been discovered, and the city had received an impetus that would advance her beyond all her sisters on the Pacific shore. I felt proud of my achievement, and was foolish enough to promise myself a substantial recognition of my labors.”

—Attributed to James Beckwourth by T.D. Bonner on the arrival of the first wagon train traveling via the Beckwourth trail in Marysville, California

## The Man, the Myths, the Legends

James Beckwith (changed to Beckwourth in 1853) earned a place in the pantheon of the Mountain Men who opened the West. Jim rode, trapped, hunted, traded and fought alongside many of those rugged individuals who became legends of the fur trade era. That was the first act of a career as a frontiersman that encompasses roughly 50 years.

Jim traveled the nation, a witness to its growing pains. He was at many important events in American history, including the Bear Flag Rebellion, the Seminole War and Sand Creek Massacre. He was a war chief among the Crow Indians. His resume includes a variety of jobs—trapper, scout, hunter, wagon guide, hotel manager, dispatch rider, trader,

Mountain man James Beckwourth was born around 1800 in Virginia, but his father moved him to Missouri when he was about nine years old. He went West in 1824 with the Rocky Mountain Fur Company and afterwards lived most of his life in the West as a trapper, mountain man, trailblazer and soldier.

True West Archives

When Beckwourth witnessed the high snow levels on the Donner Lake Wagon Road (right, the Summit House at Dutch Flat) he sought and found a lower-elevation wagon route for miners and emigrants, which was named Beckwourth Pass.



merchant, horse thief, warrior, prospector and gambler to name a few. Beckwourth is remembered more for his racial heritage than the astounding life he reputedly led. Even with a stellar resume, equal or better than many of his contemporaries, Beckwourth did not always get the respect he had earned.

**“Beckwourth, a mongrel of French, American and Negro blood...is a ruffian of the worst stamp, bloody and treacherous, without honor or honesty...”**

—Francis Parkman

Given the inconsistent record-keeping associated with the fur trade, Parkman’s damning of Beckwourth reads more as a fit of racial pique, rather than a cold reading of the historic record. Jim’s mixed-race background, his unabashed preference for living as an Indian, his multiple wives and his boastful pride in his own accomplishments did not set well with many Americans, especially in a world where people of color were not supposed to rise to the level of celebrity he achieved.

Beckwourth’s public championing of American Indian issues was not popular in his world. This is a curious aspect of his life. As a Crow war leader, Army scout, vigilante and militiaman, he had cause to fight the Lakota, Cheyenne and other tribes in numerous actions. Yet, he took up their cause, arguing for fair treatment at the hands of the government and White society. When Jim was called to testify at the Congressional hearing regarding the Sand Creek Massacre, the representatives of the

military shut down his testimony regarding his conversations with the Indian prisoners and survivors of the massacre. The military argued that Beckwourth was being treasonous by trying to insert the views of an enemy into the proceedings.

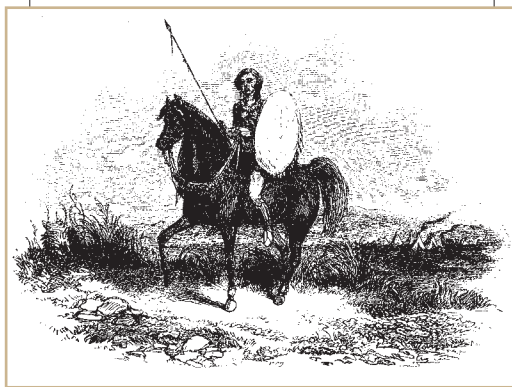
Beckwourth unabashedly liked to talk about himself to anyone who would listen. In the process he left an impressive number of stories about his adventures and misadventures. Jim was somewhat of an entertainer in social settings. Embellishment came as second nature to the storyteller. Jim did not see himself as a chronicler speaking to history. Some stories about him are true, while others are loosely based upon fact. Yet more recollections were

made up by James, and more made up by others, including his chosen biographer T.D. Bonner. Bonner is credited with polishing up Beckwourth’s recollections and seems to have invented a few details in the process. Samuel Butler wrote, “Any fool can tell the truth, but it requires a man of some sense to know how to lie well.”

Fuzzy facts are common during this period. Many of Beckwourth’s contemporaries, such as Jim Bridger, were afflicted with the same penchant for spinning stories and enhancing their own legends without raising the ire of one of the nation’s foremost contemporary historians.

The result of all these wagging tongues and “polishing” of imperfect recollections is that, for a substantial portion of what we have heard about Beckwourth, it remains difficult to define precisely what might be factual. There are consistencies in the descriptions of those who met him as to his affability, bravery and fairness in trade that have a ring of authenticity. Jim’s poor memory for dates and spelling of place names complicates attempts to pin down his participation in several events. The date of his birth, the specifics of his mixed-race ancestry, his status among the Crow Indians, the spelling of his name, and even the cause of his death have unsettled aspects about them.

Beckwourth’s descriptions of life among the Crow people ring truer



It was not unusual for trappers or mountain men to marry Indian women, but James Beckwourth actually was adopted into a Crow Band in the mid-1820s. He married and became a respected warrior and chief of the tribe, all the while trapping for the American Fur Company.

True West Archives

The Gold and Quicksilver District of California, July 25, 1848, was one of the earliest maps to illustrate the trails to the gold districts of the Sierra Nevada.

Maps Courtesy Library of Congress

than his more self-serving descriptions of combat and survival. As with many of his contemporaries, we consume their recollections with a grain of salt. Perhaps in our search for the unattainable truths of the man's story we have lost the meaning of his rise from humble beginnings to succeed and survive in worlds where the odds in opposition to both were stacked against him. It is sufficient to say that Beckwourth was very active in the fur trade era and the subsequent opening of the West. Few of his contemporaries covered as much territory and were present at as many of the events that made up the complex history of Westward expansion.

## Ho to California!

The discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill on the American Fork River set in motion an international exodus that Jim was well-positioned to exploit. In 1849 Jim had been working as a dispatch rider and livestock trader. His income was supplemented by his work as a monte dealer. For a brief time, Jim was fabulously rich from his winnings. All too soon the money was spent and he moved on to the Greenwood Valley where he was laid low for the winter by rheumatism.

As his health improved, he took the path of many Californians who abandoned their previous lines of work for the lure of easy riches in El Dorado. In the spring of 1850, Jim tried his hand at prospecting. It was during these explorations he noticed a low pass (5,221 feet above mean sea level) which appeared to traverse the Sierra Nevada. Recognizing an



An 1851 map of California was updated in 1860 and clearly marks Beckwourth Pass on the Nevada-California border as well as Beckwourth's Trail to its southern terminus in Marysville.





James Marshall's discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill launched the California Gold Rush.

Courtesy Library of Congress

opportunity, Jim returned from his unsuccessful attempt at striking it rich and explored the pass. He determined the route was suitable for wagons and provided good grass and water with gentler terrain within the pass than the tried-and-true wagon routes. The hard lessons of the star-crossed Donner Party of 1846-47 were a vivid memory in California, and the Truckee route through, what later became Donner Pass—altitude 7,057 feet above mean sea level—leading to Johnson's Ranch became all but impassible during the snowy months. Those unfortunate emigrants resorted to murder and cannibalism to survive. The harrowing tales of the survivors became infamous and even cast a pall on the route, despite the lure of quick riches once over the Sierra.

Beckwourth's pass, at almost a third of a mile lower elevation than Donner Pass, was expected to remain snow-free longer and have less snowpack to contend with over the course of a season. Jim recognized his pass, positioned to the north of the Truckee route, had the potential to become the most popular route. He set about developing a trail through the pass with his own financial resources.

According to Beckwourth, Marysville, which already served as a support hub to many of the northern mines, agreed to help support the road. A wagon road linking the community to the east, and allowing emigrants direct access, was a desirable development.



Freight wagons and emigrant wagon trains plied Beckwourth's trail east and west across the Sierra Nevada in the 1850s and 1860s, but wagon travel diminished with the arrival of the Central Pacific Railroad.

Photos Courtesy Library of Congress

Beckwourth set about carefully laying out the new wagon road. The route departed from the Truckee Route in the Glendale Valley near the modern location of Sparks, Nevada, and took a northerly route, swapping length of travel for challenges created by slope. The winding trail went through the relatively gentle pass discovered by Jim and bent a large arc to the north. The destination of the Beckwourth trail was Bidwell Bar Ranch, where a wagon road entered from the east and an improved road headed north to Marysville from there. In all, Jim's winding route traversed roughly 200 miles.

Like most new wagon routes of the period, Beckwourth's trail was advertised with a certain amount of exaggeration. Jim claimed it as "the best wagon-road." Others promoted its abundance of good grass and water, both necessary for keeping livestock healthy. The pass was compared with South Pass in modern Wyoming for presenting a gradual slope. The easy nature of the pass is indisputable. However, the pass is but a small part of a long route. There are roughly 150 miles of more challenging travel beyond the western end of the pass. Emigrants lulled by the inviting nature of the pass soon found that rocky trail and crossings of five mountains were ahead. The difficulties in terrain reached an apex in ascending the mountain near Beckwourth's War Horse Ranch, where his hotel and trading post were situated.



Emigrants weren't the only beneficiaries of Beckwourth's wagon road; miners seeking their bonanza in California's goldfields or Nevada's Comstock also used the trailblazer's easier lower-elevation route north of Donner Pass.

Courtesy California Historical Society

Traveling the route in 1852, John Denton described the mountain as being "...a mountain that is a mountain..." and rocky with a slope approaching that of the roof of a house. All of these difficulties paled in comparison to Donner Pass. Colossal snowdrifts, frequent in Donner Pass, were able to bring livestock-powered travel to a halt in ways that slope and rocky terrain rarely matched.

## Guide, Rancher, Publican and Mercantilist

In 1851, Jim guided the first wagon train through the pass and into the Marysville area.

A member of that wagon company was 11-year-old Ina Coolbrith, destined to become the poet laureate of California. The little girl was smitten with their charismatic guide. He was tall, swarthy, hair braided in Crow style, and every bit the walking, talking epitome of the heroic Rocky Mountain men who opened the West. She recounts the joy of being allowed with her sister to cross the pass riding bareback on one of Jim's horses. "Here is California, little girls, here is your kingdom," she remembers him announcing. In an unfortunate twist of fate, the town burned to the ground.

Was it a celebratory accident or arson? As luck would have it for James, the burning of Marysville was credited to him in gossip, despite the fact that he depended on the good graces of the community of Marysville to help him recover the costs of preparing the trail.

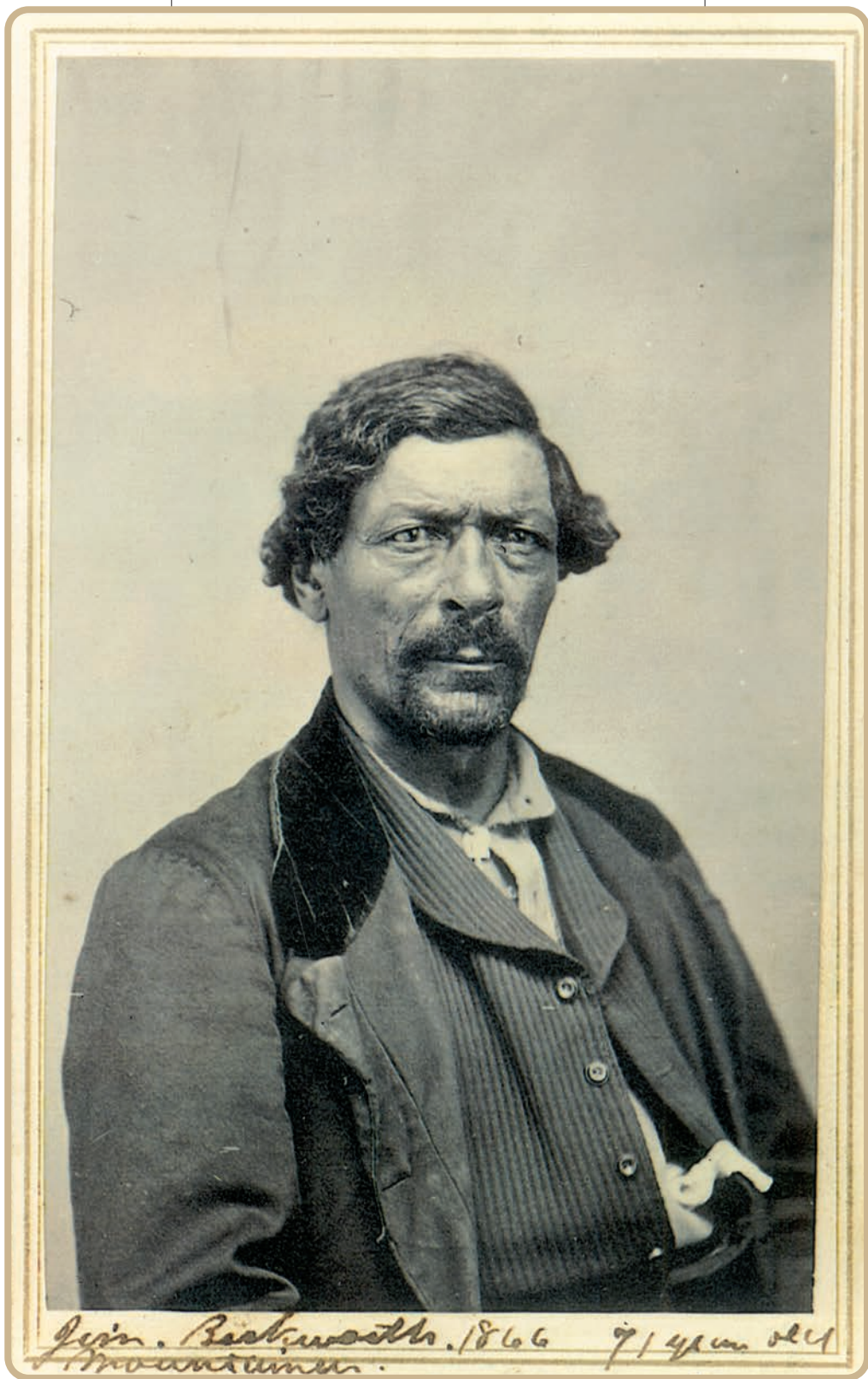
On September 1, 1851, Beckwith & Company submitted a petition to the Marysville Town Council in an attempt to receive remuneration for the expenses incurred preparing the wagon road. The document was referred to a committee and was never acted upon. The money supposedly promised by Marysville did not materialize, and Jim decided to make the best of things. He filed a land claim in 1852 and built a hotel and store at his Sierra Valley (soon to be Beckwourth Valley) ranch. He was not alone in establishing these lodging and mercantiles to serve the emigrant traffic. His War Horse Ranch became a hub of commercial activity. The most reliable gold in California was in mining the miners, and Beckwourth was an able salesman. Jim was able to build a frame house, the first seen by many emigrants in months of travel. Jim entertained his customers by recounting episodes, both real and imagined, from his adventurous life. The next year Jim was busy in a small cabin

recounting his memoirs to T.D. Bonner.

By 1853 Beckwourth's trail proved to be a success. It is difficult to determine accurate numbers of emigrants who used the new route, but by some accounts it was the most popular route for a short time. Use of Beckwourth Trail continued into the 1860s, but traffic numbers declined once tolls were levied for its use. By 1855 trader Beckwourth left his wagon road, moved to Colorado and opened a general store. There were adventures sufficient between 1855 and his death in 1867 (or 1866) to fill most lifetimes. He fought against the Apaches and the Cheyennes as a militia member. He was a scout for the military at the Sand Creek Massacre (November 29, 1864) and was either poisoned or died of natural causes when guiding the military to a Crow village in Montana. Say what you will about James P. Beckwourth, his was not a boring life.



**Terry A. Del Bene** the author of *The Donner Party Cookbook: A Guide to Survival on the Hastings Cutoff* and several other historic books about the American West.



Will we ever know the full truth of James Beckwourth's legendary Western life? Probably not, but he remains one of the greatest of the youthful men who went West with William Ashley's 100 in 1824.

True West Archives

TRUE WEST  
EXCLUSIVE

# CLASSIC GUNFIGHTS

## TRAGIC POWWOW

### THE APACHE KID VS AL SIEBER, THEN EVERYONE IN ARIZONA



A miscommunication changes the Apache Kid's life.

Illustrations by Bob Boze Bell

BY BOB BOZE BELL

Maps & Graphics by Gus Walker

Based on the research of  
Dr. Sam Palmer, Dan Thrapp,  
Lynda Sánchez and William S. Bryan

JUNE 1, 1887

**"The Indians know by motions. We know by signs. Antonio reached out his hand and made a circle in his hand and spoke in Apache at the same time. He said that the five scouts will be sent down to the islands."**

—Chief Gonshayee, an eyewitness to the fight, who testified that Antonio Diaz's sign conveyed to the Indians that the scouts would be sent to Alcatraz or Florida, which trigged the shoot-out



Absent from duty for five days, the Apache Kid, along with four other Apache scouts under his command, ride single file into the headquarters of the San Carlos Reservation (near Globe, Arizona). The Kid was acting chief of scouts while Al Sieber was away at Fort Apache and the White River Subagency.

Upon his return to San Carlos, Sieber has summoned the Kid after hearing he killed another Apache in an alcohol-fueled family feud. (The offending liquor? Tizwin, a traditional Apache drink made from the heart of the mescal plant.)

Told by a messenger that the Kid wants to powwow, Sieber contacts the commanding officer, Capt. Francis Pierce; two interpreters are also notified. The clock is approaching 5 p.m. as Sieber and Pierce proceed, on foot, from headquarters to Sieber's tent (a 75-yard walk) to meet the incoming party.

Despite the appearance of the Kid and his men, who are carrying their arms openly in direct violation of camp regulations, none of the men in Sieber's party is armed.

As word of the scouts' arrival has spread, other Apaches from the nearby camps are gravitating toward the tent, and some of them are armed, as well.

Walking up to the scouts, Sieber says, "Hello, Kid." Returning the greeting, the Apache Kid and his scouts dismount, with their weapons in their hands.

Captain Pierce asks, "Where are the five scouts who have been absent?" The Apache Kid and the others step forward.

"Give me your rifle," Pierce orders the Kid. The Kid complies. Pierce demands his gun belt, too, and the Kid gives it up. The captain places the rifle against Sieber's tent and the gun belt in a chair. He then demands the same

from the other four scouts. They, in turn, give up their arms and gun belts.

Pointing in the direction of the guardhouse, the captain barks, "Calaboose!" (Spanglish for jail). Several of the Indians pick up their gun belts and remove their knife scabbards.

At this point, both Pierce and Sieber hear an "unusual commotion." They turn to see mounted Indians loading their rifles. (The assembled Apaches later claim one of the interpreters, Antonio Diaz, had intimated, with Apache sign, that the arrested scouts would be sent to the "island," which signified Alcatraz or even Florida, where Geronimo and other Apache leaders were being held as prisoners of war.)

Alarmed by this prospect, several of the disarmed scouts lunge for their weapons as Captain Pierce jumps in between them, trying to shove their guns away and out of reach. The Kid makes a grab for his carbine, but Sieber grabs the rifle with his right hand, while shoving the Kid back with his left.

Unable to retrieve his weapon, the Kid runs around the tent and disappears.

"Look out, Sieber!" Pierce yells. "They are going to shoot!" Sieber kicks the guns toward the tent as two shots ring out, one right after the other. Sieber and Pierce dive into the tent as bullets rip through the twin openings, from front to back.

Sieber grabs his weapon and runs out to engage the shooters. He fires at a mounted Apache who has just fired at him. But before Sieber can fire again, a .45-70 slug tears into his left leg below the knee, breaking the bone and knocking him flat. He crawls back into the tent as the Apaches disappear into the twilight.

The unexpected gunfight is over, but the long, tragic nightmare of the Apache Kid has just begun.



## Caught Between the Military and the Deep Blue Sea

Two companies of cavalry take the field within 15 minutes of the fight. They trail the Apaches for 15 miles along the San Carlos River. (The Kid's party includes about 17 members; some are on foot, as they were unable to find a horse in time.) From the river, the fleeing Apaches turn south, through Aravaipa Canyon.

When the Apaches reach the San Pedro River, one of the renegades, believed to be a Yaqui, kills William Diehl near Mammoth Mill, 60 miles north of Benson. The band steals two horses and then strikes again, killing Mike Grace, whose body is found northwest of Crittenden.

After a feint toward Mexico, the Kid's band camps high on the Rincon Mountains (east of Tucson), where soldiers surprise them, capturing all of the Apaches' horses and supplies.

After 24 days of running, the Kid surrenders. He is then tried, along with four scouts, by a military court.

The Kid and his scouts are found guilty and sentenced to death by firing squad, but Gen. Nelson Miles objects to the ruling and asks the court to reconsider its verdict.

On August 3, at Camp Thomas, the reconvened court resents the five to life imprisonment, which Miles reduces to 10 years. Under heavy guard, the convicted scouts, including the Kid, are delivered to Alcatraz, in San Francisco Bay, to serve their time.

Upon military review of the case, which reveals prejudice among officers on the jury, the Apache Kid's sentence is overturned, and he is sent home after serving 16 months.

Angry Arizona civilians convince the courts that the military had no jurisdiction in the case. By the close of 1888, the Kid and his comrades have been ordered back to San Carlos.

A new trial is held in Globe, and Al Sieber is the chief witness against the Apaches. Not surprisingly, the jury declares all the defendants guilty and the judge sentences them to seven years in Yuma Territorial Prison.

The Apache Kid and other prisoners are gathered for transport to Yuma, via Riverside and the rail station in Casa Grande. Al Sieber offers Sheriff Glenn Reynolds the use of an Army escort, but the sheriff declines. It costs him his life.



Chief of Scouts Al Sieber is crippled for life after his leg stops a .45-70 slug during the Apache Kid melee.

All photos True West Archives

## A Daring Escape!

**November 1, 1889**

It is a rough, two-day stage ride from Globe to Casa Grande, Arizona. Sheriff Glenn Reynolds is transporting the Apache Kid and eight other prisoners who will be put on the train in Casa Grande to take them to the Yuma penitentiary. The weather is cold and wet, and snow is in the forecast.

On the second morning, four miles out of Riverside (see map, below), the stage encounters Ripsey Wash, followed by a steep incline. The sheriff and his hired guard, William "Hunkydory" Holmes, get out of the stage, along with seven of the prisoners. With only the driver, Eugene Middleton, and two prisoners aboard (including the Kid), the horses struggle but successfully make it up the soggy and steepest part of the ridge. It is snowing.

As Middleton and his coach clear the grade, he hears men scuffling behind him, then two shots. (At first he's not alarmed because the sheriff had been target shooting earlier.) When Middleton looks back, though, he can't see anything through the brush.

In a moment, a Mexican prisoner, Jesus Avott, frantically runs up, explaining that the Indians are going to kill him. He asks Middleton what to do, and the driver tells him to get on the stage. As Avott raises his foot to get in, one of the Apache prisoners, Bach-e-on-al, runs up, brandishing Holmes' rifle. He fires, hitting Middleton in the face, and the driver topples to the ground. The newly freed prisoners bring up the keys and unchain the Kid as they debate whether to crush Middleton's skull with a rock (popular legend says the Apache Kid stops them because Middleton had shared a cigarette with the Kid the night before at Riverside Station).

Grabbing ammunition, money and whatever else they can use, the escapees cut loose the horses and scatter into the wilderness.

Incredibly, Middleton is still alive and makes his way back toward Riverside for help.

A subsequent posse is thwarted by a snowstorm that obliterates the fugitives' tracks.



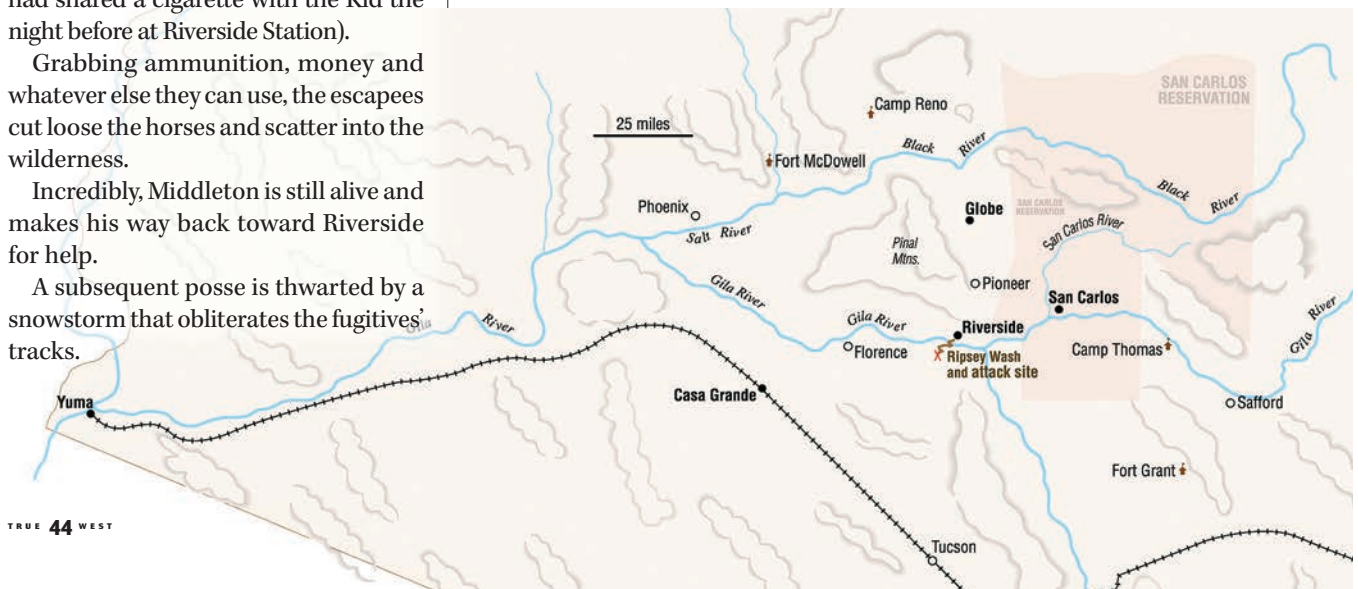
The stage road from Riverside to Florence follows several washes like this one, at left, which drains into Ripsey Wash. This steep stretch is about 50 yards shy of the ambush site; it would have been difficult for a stage full of prisoners to traverse this area in wet conditions. Below is a panorama taken of the spot where Middleton stopped the stage. Notice that he wouldn't have been able to see around the bushes that flank the road leading into the draw.



Ridge topping out from Kelvin Grade (arrow); spot where Middleton rested the horses (X).

### The Prisoners' Perfect Moment

Trudging up the steep grade (right), Sheriff Reynolds is walking in front of the prisoners. He carries a shotgun over his arm, but his pistol and gun belt are stored under his long coat, which is buttoned up against the cold. When two of the Indians rush the sheriff, they quickly overpower him by pinning his arms. Meanwhile, the two Apaches walking in front of Holmes, who is bringing up the rear, turn and throw a blanket they are carrying over his head. They grab Holmes' rifle from him and fatally shoot Reynolds; Holmes dies of a heart attack.





### The Prisoners are Photographed Prior to Their Bold Escape

After a group of Apache defendants is found guilty in a Globe courtroom, they are photographed (above) before they depart for the Yuma Territorial Prison. Note that the Apache Kid (standing, second from right) is still wearing his brass reservation tag on his left breast pocket.

When the Apaches get out of the stage near Ripsey Wash, Bach-e-on-al (front row, center, indicted under the name Pash-ten-tah) allegedly slips free of his handcuffs. He and El-cahn (standing, far left) overpower the sheriff as another two Apaches attack Holmes, who reportedly dies of a heart attack before being shot. Hos-cal-te and Say-es (standing, second and third from left) are later recaptured and die in prison. Not shown is prisoner Jesus Avott, sentenced to one year in prison for selling a friend's horse for \$50.

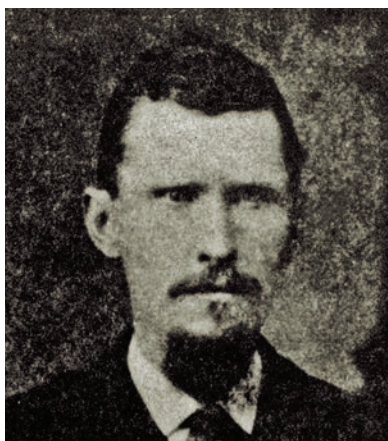
### The Fallen Lawmen

While transporting the prisoners via stage, Sheriff Reynolds (right) carried a Colt .45 and a double-barreled shotgun loaded with buckshot. In addition to turning down the offer of a scout escort (Reynolds allegedly told Al Sieber, "I can take those Indians alone with a corn cob and a lightning bug."), the sheriff started the trip without his horse, which he left at Riverside. Had he been on horseback, he may have averted the disastrous outcome.

Hunkydory Holmes (bottom right) had a lever action Winchester and a pistol. Middleton also carried a pistol. On the ill-fated journey, Holmes allegedly took it upon himself to cheer up the prisoners by sharing his original poetry. Here's a few lines:

#### Hunkydory

*Oh, I am a jolly miner lad,  
Resolved to see some fun sir,  
To satisfy my mind  
To Phoenix town I came sir  
Oh, what a pretty place  
And what a charming city  
Where the boys they are so gay  
And the squaws they are so pretty*



## Aftermath: Odds & Ends

Military and civilian authorities launched a colossal manhunt for the escapees. By the summer of 1890, all the fugitives had been killed or captured—all except the Apache Kid. By 1892, the State of Arizona offered a \$6,000 reward for the Kid, and several officers were commanded to bring in the Kid, dead or alive. No one ever claimed the reward.



Eugene Middleton survived his face wounds and ran the Riverside stage station for several years. He then moved to Globe where he owned a successful apartment building. He died in 1929 of natural causes. He was 68.



For many years, historians believed the Apache Kid escaped into the Sierra Madre and lived out his life. However, in 2017 *True West* contributing editor, Lynda Sánchez, along with the help of genealogist William S. Bryan, uncovered strong evidence from letters and diaries written by the men who participated in the macabre case of the raid on Colonia Pacheco by the Apache Kid. Two Mormon ranchers from that community, Martin Harris and Thomas Allen, carefully tracked the raiders. They jumped a camp of the Apaches, and while most of the band scattered as was Apache custom, the man they later identified as the Kid tried to detach his rifle and defend the Apaches with him. Martin and Harris shot the Kid, killing him almost instantly. The body was later identified by several who knew him. They had freighted to and from San Carlos before settling in the Sierra Madre and had often seen the Kid while he was a scout at San Carlos. The year was 1900, the dawn of a new century.

This groundbreaking evidence was published in the February 2019 issue of *True West* and will later appear with more detail in Lynda Sánchez's book, *Broken Loop: The Fate of The Lost Apaches*.



**Recommended:** *The Apache Kid* by Phyllis de la Garza, published by Westernlore Press; *Al Sieber: Chief of Scouts* by Dan L. Thrapp, published by University of Oklahoma Press.



## CLASSIC TRUE WEST

FROM THE TRUE WEST ARCHIVES

**Editor's Note:** *True West's* official historian, Paul Andrew Hutton, has been a major contributor and advisor to the magazine for more than two decades. If you'd like to read more of Hutton's articles, like "Noonan's Last Stand" from the November–December 2005 issue, please go to [TrueWestMagazine.com](http://TrueWestMagazine.com) and subscribe for full access to 70 years' worth of exciting issues of *True West*.

BY PAUL HUTTON

# NOONAN'S LAST STAND

**"WE WAS FLABBERGASTED."**

**The proud slayers of a huge grizzly are memorialized in one of the most famous photographs in all of Western history.**

By August 7, 1874, when the photo was taken by William H. Illingworth, Custer had already explored the fabled Black Hills, and his dispatches, carried to Fort Laramie by scout Charley Reynolds, were full of praise for this western Eden with its "gold in paying qualities."

Now returning eastward to Fort Lincoln, he was not far from Bear Butte when, riding ahead of his command with but three companions, he spotted a fine campsite (about two miles south of present-day Nahant, South Dakota). John Noonan and Bloody Knife then spied a huge grizzly some 75 yards distant. Custer, galloping forward, brought the bruin down with a shot from his Remington. The wounded bear turned to confront the hunters as Bloody Knife and Ludlow shot it three more times.

Custer was elated. "I have reached the hunter's highest round of fame," he wrote his wife Elizabeth. "I have killed my grizzly." He ordered Noonan to haul the 600-pound behemoth back to a rock outcropping overlooking the campsite.

As the wagons rolled in and the troopers set up their tents, Custer and his fellow hunters posed with their bear for Illingworth's camera.

The intrepid pioneer photographer took two versions of this famous photograph (soon on sale throughout the East). In the first shot, the hunters are grouped around the bear, all kneeling, except for a sad-sack-looking Noonan. In the second photograph, Ludlow is standing and Noonan has brushed his hat brim back to better show his face.

Within a few years, three of the men in the photograph will have met violent deaths. Ludlow survived to a ripe old age, but Custer and Bloody Knife died at Little Bighorn on June 25, 1876. Noonan was with Custer on that final campaign, but the sergeant survived as he had been left at the Yellowstone Depot in charge of the cattle herd. Death had not yet come for him.

### Noonan's celebrated wife

Having joined the Seventh in January 1872, the Fort Wayne, Indiana, native had impressed his superiors and even the colonel's lady. "He was the handsomest soldier in his company," noted Elizabeth Custer, "[and] we often admired the admirably fitting uniform his wife had made



This stereograph shows, in the center, Lt. Col. George A. Custer of the Seventh Cavalry, flanked on one side by Bloody Knife, his favorite Indian scout (with one of the colonel's exhausted hounds asleep at his side), and on the other by Capt. William Ludlow, chief engineer officer for the Department of Dakota. Behind them stands Private John Noonan, serving as Custer's orderly.

True West Archives

over, and which displayed to advantage his well-proportioned figure."

Noonan's wife was a celebrated lady of the Seventh, although far removed from the social circle of Mrs. Custer. Nevertheless, the colonel's lady knew her well: "When she first came to our regiment she was married to a trooper, who, to all appearances, was good to her. My first knowledge of her was in Kentucky. She was our laundress, and when she brought the linen home, it was fluted and frilled so daintily that

I considered her a treasure.... The woman was a Mexican, and like the rest of that hairy tribe she had so coarse and stubborn a beard that her chin had a blue look after shaving, in marked contrast to her swarthy face. She was tall, angular, awkward, and seemingly coarse, but I knew her to be tender hearted."

"Old Nash," as the laundress was called (she kept her first husband's surname), had led a difficult life. She once even dressed as a man, driving ox teams over the Santa Fe Trail to New Mexico. Her own two children had died in Mexico, but she assisted many a Seventh Cavalry child into the world as she had learned midwifery from her mother and was a skilled practitioner of that art. Often would she say, "Are you comph?" in a labored accent to the young pregnant wives. The phrase became a favorite in the regiment.

John Burkman, Custer's orderly for nine years, recalled that no one was more "in demand to chase the rabbit when some woman was expectin' a baby" than Old Nash. Despite her revered status in the regiment, Old Nash was unlucky in love. She was married to, and deserted by, two Seventh Cavalry troopers before meeting her third and final husband, John Noonan.

Her matrimonial trials, at least in the mind of Mrs. Custer, were the result of her industry—for her first two husbands also deserted with her substantial savings. Noonan had the best of the bargain, Elizabeth thought, "for notwithstanding his wife was no longer young, and was undeniably homely, she could cook well and spared him from eating with his company, and she was a good investment, for she earned so much by her industry."

Her third husband was in the field on campaign when she took suddenly ill and died. She had implored those who cared for her in her final days to place her in a coffin and bury her at once. This they would not do for one so beloved by the regiment. When Old Nash passed on October 30, 1878, the ladies of the regiment carefully washed and prepared her for burial. They then made a most shocking discovery. Noted John Burkman: "We was flabbergasted."

A dispatch from Bismarck, Dakota Territory, informed the world: "A singular development transpired at Fort Lincoln today. Mrs. Sergeant Noonan, who died last night, turns out to be a man.... There is no explanation of the unnatural union except that the supposed Mexican woman was worth \$10,000 and was able to buy her husband's silence. She has been with the 7th Cavalry nine years."

Noonan didn't inherit a fortune from his wife, for she gave all she had to the Bismarck Catholic Church. What Noonan did receive was unrelenting ridicule from his fellow troopers. "When Noonan come back from scout duty we told him about his wife dyin' and all," Burkman recalled. "He was a quiet man. He didn't say much, but his face went white and kinda jerked. After that everywhere he went the regiment joshed him."

Burkman was with the post carpenter on Noonan's last day: "Noonan walked in. His face was gaunt and sorta set. The carpenter looked up. 'Hello Noonan!' he says. 'Say, you and Mrs. Noonan never had no children, did you?' We all started laughin' and then we stopped sudden. Noonan was standin', lookin' at us...like an animal that's been hurt. Then, afore we had sense to stop him he pulled out his gun and shot hisself dead, right thar at our feet."

The newspapers reported that Noonan's suicide had taken place on November 30, 1878, while he was alone in the cavalry stables—but the end was the same no matter the place. Back East, the *Army and Navy Journal* sermonized on the end of the scandal: "He crawled away lonely and forsaken and blew out the life that promised nothing but infamy and disgrace. The suicide was committed with a pistol, and Noonan shot himself through the heart. The affair created almost as intense excitement at the post as did the announcement of the death of Mrs. Noonan, but there was a sigh of relief on the corporate lips of the 7th Cavalry when its members heard that Noonan by his own hand had relieved the regiment of the odium which the man's presence cast upon them."

In the West, the verdict was far less judgmental. Elizabeth Custer, now a widow herself, upon reading of her

beloved laundress' death said: "Poor old thing, I hope she is 'comph' at last."

Burkman and his fellow troopers, far from being relieved by Noonan's suicide, were in fact "terrible ashamed." He was, after all, one of them. "It takes all kinds o' men to make up an army," Burkman declared years later. "Officers, o'course, whose doin's is writ up in books, but it takes a lot o' common fellows too, like me...and Noonan—jist privates, men that don't know nothin' except what they're told to do, that kills and gits killed, and that the world never hears about.... And yet to ourselves we seemed important. Noonan's troubles meant jist as much to him as though he'd been a Major. Hundreds of graves scattered over Dakota and Montana of men that's never been missed, never been writ up, but they was good soldiers jist the same, and without 'em thar wouldn't've been no country, maybe."

Noonan was buried in the post cemetery at Fort Abraham Lincoln. Bugler John Martini, who had carried Custer's last message, sounded taps over the grave. Eventually reinterred at Custer Battlefield National Cemetery (Grave 573A), Noonan now fittingly rests upon the very field where so many of his comrades perished in battle. He had come, in his own way, to that same place.



**Paul Hutton** is a Distinguished Professor of History at the University of New Mexico. His book, *The Custer Reader*, received the John M. Carroll Literary Award from the Little Big Horn Associates.

## TRUE WEST ARCHIVES

For the first time ever, every issue of *True West* magazine is now online, including Paul Andrew Hutton's original article as it appeared in the November-December 2005 issue. To learn more about how you can read all of Hutton's articles and subscribe to *True West Archives*, go to [TrueWestMagazine.com](http://TrueWestMagazine.com).

**Our past awaits you!**

BY JOHNNY D. BOGGS

# From Tennessee to Texas

*Following David Crockett to the Alamo is a heritage trip of a lifetime.*



By 1877, only the church and Long Barrack remained of the old mission where Davy Crockett died on March 6, 1836. Today the site in downtown San Antonio is, along with the city's four other historic missions, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Alamo Photo by Carol M. Highsmith Archives Courtesy Library of Congress/  
Historic Alamo Image Courtesy True West Archives



**I**n 1835, David Crockett was a noted author who had spent much of the previous year promoting *A Narrative of the Life of David Crockett of the State of Tennessee* (written with Thomas Chilton). Now, he had two new books out. He also had a wife (sort of), a family (when he saw them) and the status of living legend.

What he didn't have was a job.

By only 252 votes, the citizens of Tennessee's 12th Congressional district had chosen Adam R. "Old Black Hawk" Huntsman, who had lost a leg in the 1813 Creek War, to represent them instead of Crockett. Crockett took defeat as graciously as one might expect from a man of the cane, writing his publishers that "I was Completely Rasked out of my election."

That fall, Crockett set off for Texas with nephew William Patton and neighbors Lindsay K. Tinkle and Abner Burgin.

## Early Years

Crockett was born on August 17, 1786, near Limestone, Tennessee (David Crockett Birthplace State Park). In 1794, the Crocketts moved to what is now Morristown (Crockett Tavern Museum). Married to Polly Finley in 1806, Crockett resettled his family in Lincoln County in 1811, then Franklin County, served in the 1813 Creek War and moved to Lawrence County in 1817, becoming a justice of the peace and Lawrenceburg's town commissioner. Polly died in 1815, and Crockett married Elizabeth Patton the following year.

Though preferring wandering and hunting, Crockett was elected to the state legislature in 1821, lost an 1825 bid for a U.S. Congressional seat but won it two years later. He was an Andy Jackson man, till Jackson decided to kick American Indians out of their Southeastern homelands. Crockett railed against Old Hickory—another reason Crockett lost that 1835 election.

## Leaving Tennessee

Sam Houston, who had also bumped heads with Jackson and left politics after a matrimonial scandal, had returned to Tennessee after spending time in the



A replica cabin of David Crockett's boyhood home—Davy was Rebecca Hawkins Crockett's fifth son in six years—stands at the 105-acre David Crockett Birthplace State Park, which features a campground near the Nolichucky River.

All Images by Johnny D. Boggs Unless Otherwise Noted



Crockett County was created in Texas in 1875, and this 13-foot-high granite monument to David Crockett went up in Ozona in 1939.

Indian territories and Texas. Houston likely talked up Texas, so Crockett set out West, writing his brother-in-law that “we will go through Arkinsaw and I want to explore Texas well before I return.”

On November 10, Crockett and his crew reached Memphis (Davies Manor Historic Site, Sun Studio). He enjoyed “horns of drink with citizens and comrades at the Union Hotel, Hart’s Saloon, and Neil McCool’s establishment,” Michael Wallis writes in *David Crockett: The Lion of the West*. And it was here, Wallis writes, that Crockett gave his famous quote:

“Since you have chosen to elect a man with a timber toe to succeed me, you may all go to hell and I will go to Texas.”

The *Truth Teller*, a Jackson, Tennessee, newspaper, reported that Crockett was “going to join the American forces against the Mexicans.” The *Vermont Gazette* was blunter, reporting that Crockett “modestly gives out that he will have Santa Anna’s head for a watch-seal before the campaign is over.”

### Arkansas traveler

Crockett and his pards were ferried across the Mississippi River into Arkansas. On November 12, the party reached Little Rock (Historic Arkansas Museum, Old State House Museum), where Crockett took in a puppet show and butchered a deer behind the Jeffries hotel.

The *Gazette* reported that news of the arrival of Crockett—“the *reel critter* himself”—“rapidly spread, and we believe within bounds, when we say, that

hundreds flocked to see the wonderful man, who, it is said, can whip his weight in wild-cats, or grin the largest panther out of a tree.”

Anti-Jackson men treated Crockett to supper.

“We shall die contented,” the editors of *The Advocate* said. “We have seen the Hon. DAVID CROCKETT—who arrived in this place this evening, on his way to Texas, where he contemplates ending his days.”

The journalists did not know how prophetic they were.

By then, newspaper reports numbered the party at six to eight. Crockett’s entourage moved on to Washington (Historic Washington State Park) for another evening of food, drink and tall tales. But where Crockett went next is debated.

He could have crossed in present-day Sevier County, Arkansas, or traveled the military road to Fort Towson (Fort Towson Historic Site) in present-day Oklahoma. Or stepped into Texas somewhere else.

### Gone to Texas

Wherever Crockett entered Texas, he made it to Santa Fe Trail magnate William Becknell’s homestead near Clarksville (Red River County Jail Museum). He got as far west as Honey Grove and disappeared for so long, reports of his death appeared in Eastern newspapers. But in January, Crockett and pals arrived in Nacogdoches (Millard’s Crossing Historic Village, Stone Fort Museum).

How he got there depends on who tells the story. Some say he returned to Arkansas, boarded a steamboat on the Red River at Fulton, and floated to Natchitoches, Louisiana (Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Historic Site)—perhaps for great blackened alligator—and then rode east to Natchitoches’s sister city. Or maybe he merely cut across Texas to the state’s oldest town.

There, he gave a rousing speech and he and his compatriots pledged their allegiance to Texas’s provisional government. From Natchitoches, Crockett traveled to San Augustine (Mission Dolores State Historic Site), where he wrote a letter to his daughter,



Fort St. Jean Baptiste des Natchitoches was built in 1716, but was in such ruins after the 1803 Louisiana Purchase that Americans built another fort, Claiborne, nearby. The fort was reconstructed in Natchitoches in 1979.

Margaret, and her husband in Gibson County, Tennessee, saying “do not be uneasy about me for I am with friends.”

Crockett and the Tennessee Mounted Volunteers set out to join the fight, reaching present-day Washington (Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site) and eventually San Antonio (Briscoe Western Art Museum), where he entered the Alamo.

That’s where David Crockett’s life ended, but not his legend. William M.

Groneman III, author of *David Crockett: Hero of the Common Man*, tells me there’s a good reason to remember Crockett today:

“The real Davy Crockett occupies a unique position as a distinctly American character. He came into prominence as the founding fathers with European ties were passing from the scene. His life stands on a foundation of hard work, generosity, decency, public service and bravery.

“The editor of *The Niles Register*, when asked to describe Crockett reported, ‘Just such a one as you would desire to meet with if any accident or misfortune had happened to you on the highway.’

“Today, details of his life are stretched thin to cover the demands of American history, revisionist history, folklore and popular culture.”



Johnny D. Boggs recommends *David Crockett: The Lion of the West* by Michael Wallis—and anything Wallis has written.

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# A WIDE SPOT IN THE ROAD

## TEXAS RANGER HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

In 1823, the absence of an army to protect American settlers in the Mexican province of Tejas led empresario Stephen F. Austin to organize a group of men to “range” over the country. The Texas Rangers were born—as a military or quasi-military unit, though; they wouldn’t become a law-enforcement agency until 1874. The Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum had its beginnings in 1968, when the Homer Garrison Texas Ranger Museum opened at Fort Fisher Park in Waco. Today, the Hall of Fame honors 31 Texas Rangers—like John S. “Rip” Ford, who made significant contributions to the organization; and Stanley Keith Guffey, killed in the line of duty while protecting a two-year-old kidnapping victim in 1987. The museum includes a treasure trove of Rangers memorabilia, from badges and firearms to movie posters and lunch boxes. The Tobin and Anne Armstrong Texas Ranger Research Center, which opened in 1976, houses photographs, correspondence, service records and case files.

[TexasRanger.org](http://TexasRanger.org)



## GOOD EATS & SLEEPS

**GOOD GRUB:** **Loveless Café**, Nashville, TN; **Central BBQ**, Memphis, TN; **Pig and Whistle Café**, Honey Grove, TX; **Trail Boss Steakhouse**, Natchitoches, LA; **Casa Rio**, San Antonio, TX  
**GOOD LODGING:** **Urban Cowboy**, Nashville, TN; **Capital Hotel**, Little Rock, AR; **The Courthouse Inn Bed and Breakfast**, Clarksville, TX; **Crockett Hotel**, San Antonio, TX

*Texas Ranger*, a 2008 bronze by Don Hunt, stands at the entrance to the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco.



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BY SHERRY MONAHAN

## Sport Fishing in the Land of 10,000 Lakes

*In Minnesota, fresh fish and Hamm's Beer have been going hand in hand since 1865.*



Men and women equally enjoyed the sport of fishing in Minnesota in the 19th century.

Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

**F**ish was wildly popular throughout Minnesota in its early years. Chefs and home cooks offered multiple fish dishes. In 1877 R.F. Jones owned a restaurant in Minneapolis and in June that year he offered a wide selection of fish that included halibut, mackerel, cod fish, brook trout, white fish, lake trout, bass, pike, pickerel and ciscoes.

*The Saint Paul Globe* shared a humorous fish tale about an unknown patron who visited Ryan's café in May 1887. The small, thin man was an Ashland boom towner, and had a disappointed look on his face as he wandered into the café. He tossed his slouch hat on the floor under his table and sat down to look over the bill of fare. The waiter came over to take his order and he requested fried codfish, white fish, Lake Superior trout, mackerel, dried herring, boiled pike, crappies, a pickerel, shad, lobster, swordfish and halibut. When he was done ordering he tossed down the menu. The waiter then asked, "No potatoes or vegetable on the side?" The customer replied that he only

wanted fish and stated, "No, nothing but fish. I want all the fish you've got in the shebang. I read the other day that fish was first-class brain food, and if there's any way of packing brains inside my skull I want to find out. I got mixed up in that Ashland boom and I propose to eat fish three times a day now till I get brains enough inside my head to steer me clear of another such calamity. If you've got a large whale, just bring it to me now."

In May 1884 R. F. Jones was still in the business and advertised that this was the season for fresh fish, and Lake Superior's trout and white fish were the best. He also noted, "Salmon is the best, shad, mackerel, halibut, brook trout, bass, walleyes, pike and all our common fish are in the best condition; you can get all the above-named varieties. The season has been very backward and we have been compelled to buy frozen fish; but now new caught fish are plenty and the cheapest article of diet."

Menu suggestions and recipes were regular features in local newspapers, and, not surprisingly, the Minnesota

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In the 19th century, sport fishing was popular across Minnesota, as was commercial fishing on the state's lakes, large rivers and Lake Superior.

Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

papers contained fish suggestions. Recipes included fish salad, cream fish soup and baked pickerel. One story included fish dishes for the Lenten season, which suggested cold-boiled fish, baked filets of pike, fish and cucumber salad, halibut and sardine salad, and fish pie.

Another popular Minnesota product was and still is Hamm's Beer. It was created by German immigrant, Theodore Hamm. When he arrived in St. Paul, he had a dream of making a quality beer and he did just that in 1865. In 1906 his company advertised, "The beer you like at once. Hamm's beer has no peculiarities, no strange flavors. It is just good wholesome beer that comes from the best materials, careful brewing, and thorough aging. Preferred Stock is an extra pale table beer of rare quality. New Brew is the most popular beer sold in the Northwest." Of course, fishing and beer go hand in hand, and many a fish tale was told around the lake, at a fish fry or over a hole in the ice.



### FISH PIE

- 2 c. cooked fish, flaked
- ½ c. bread crumbs
- 1 c. half and half
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tbsp. butter
- Bread crumbs and butter to top

Place ½ cup bread crumbs in the bottom of a lightly buttered oven-proof dish. Add the half and half, salt and pepper, butter and fish. Top with some additional bread crumbs and butter and bake at 375° for about 15 minutes or until no longer runny.

Recipe adapted from *The Minneapolis Journal*, January 6, 1895.

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

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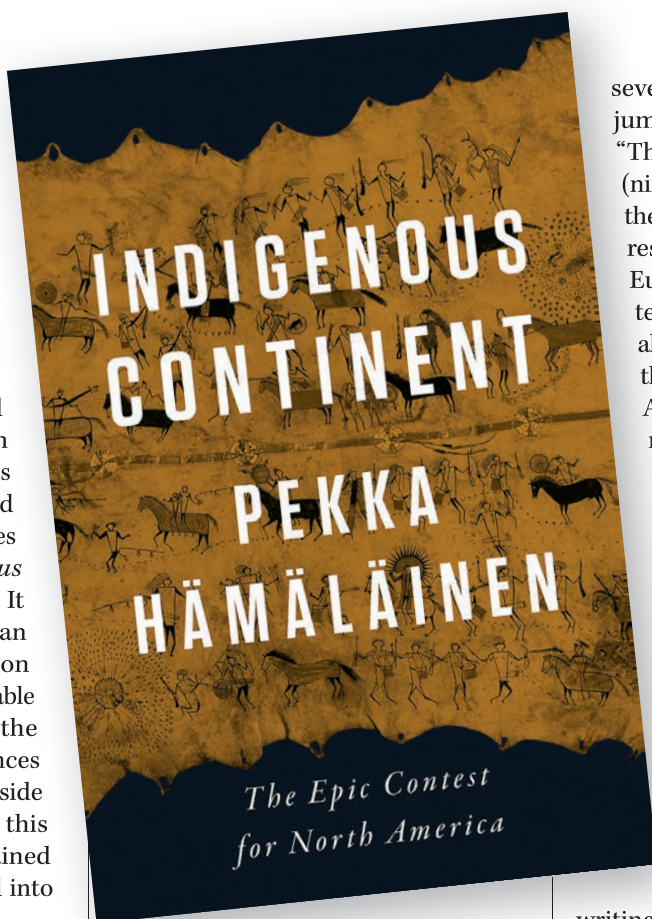
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## Battle for the New World

A bold, new interpretation of the conquest of North America, plus two new books on Western borders, a biography of King Fisher and a classic Western novel.

**F**or scholars of North American history—East, West, North or South—Pekka Hämäläinen’s *Indigenous Continent: The Epic Contest for North America* (Liveright, \$40) is one of the most important books to be published in at least a decade. From his position as the Rhodes Professor of American History at Oxford University, the Finnish historian has challenged the accepted norms of studying New World history and flipped it upside down. As he writes in his introduction, “*Indigenous Continent* tells a different story. It offers a new account of American history by challenging the notion that colonial expansion was inevitable and that colonialism defined the continent, as well as the experiences of those living on it. Stepping outside of such outdated assumptions, this book reveals a world that remained overwhelmingly Indigenous well into the 19th century.”

As an American historian who equally applies the ideas of process and place to Western history, I found Hämäläinen’s scholarship inspiring and thought-provoking. I tend to focus my interest in history to the past 250 years, but the Oxford professor’s early chapters on North American history including “The Dawn of the Indigenous Continent (the first seventy millennia)” and “Appear at a Distance Like Giants (the long



sixteenth century)” are a great reminder of the processes that created the pre-Columbian continent prior to the European entrada of 1492.

Readers of the highly illustrated *Indigenous Continent* will discover new perspectives throughout the book that can be applied to their scholarly research. For historians who write 19th-century North American history, I highly recommend spending extra time with the first

seven sections of the book before jumping forward to section eight, “The Age of Equestrian Empires (nineteenth century).” The fact that the author spends 90 percent of his research on the first 300 years of European-Indigenous history is telling and exactly the reminder we all need in writing and researching the history of the American West. As the Finnish-born scholar reminds us, “Time and again, and across centuries, Indians blocked and destroyed colonial projects, forcing Euro-Americans to accept Native ways, Native sovereignty and Native dominance. This is what the historical record shows when American history is detached from mainstream historical narratives that privilege European ambitions, European perspectives and European sources.”

I suggest anyone who is currently researching or writing North American history—and Central and South American history, for that matter—should read Hämäläinen’s *Indigenous Continent*. The award-winning historian has created a new paradigm for all writers to consider as they develop new theses and conclusions on the complex history of the northern hemisphere in the New World since Columbus’s arrival in 1492.

—Stuart Rosebrook



Photo by Robert Roy

In the last few issues, I have reflected in my column on the past year in Western history publishing. Now it is time to look forward to what history book publishers have announced or sent me in the last quarter of 2022. Here are nine I believe everyone should have on this year's history reading list:

***The Last Campaign: Sherman, Geronimo and the War for America*** by H.W. Brands (Doubleday, \$32.50); Released November 1, 2022

***Nature's Mountain Mansion: Wonder, Wrangles, Bloodshed, and Bellyaching from Nineteenth-Century Yosemite*** edited by Gary Noy (Bison Books, \$29.95); Released November 1, 2022

***True Tales of Prescott*** by Bradley Courtney and Drew Desmond (History Press, \$23.99); Released November 14, 2022

***Behind Brothel Doors: The Business of Prostitution in Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma (1860-1940)*** by Jan MacKell Collins (TwoDot, \$22.95); Released December 1, 2022

***Continental Reckoning: The American West in the Age of Expansion*** by Elliott West (University of Nebraska Press, \$39.95); Release date: February 1, 2023

***Gentleman Bandit: The True Story of Black Bart, the Old West's Most Infamous Stagecoach Robber*** by John Boessenecker (Hanover Square Press, \$32.99); Release date: March 14, 2023

***The Rediscovery of America: Native Peoples and the Unmaking of U.S. History*** by Ned Blackhawk (Yale University Press, \$35); Release date: April 25, 2023

***When Cimarron Meant Wild: The Maxwell Land Grant Conflict in New Mexico and Colorado*** by David L. Caffey (University of Oklahoma Press, \$34.95); Release date: April 27, 2023

***The Summer of 1876: Outlaws, Lawmen, and Legends in the Season That Defined the American West*** by Chris Wimmer (Viking, \$30.00); Release date: June 13, 2023

—Stuart Rosebrook

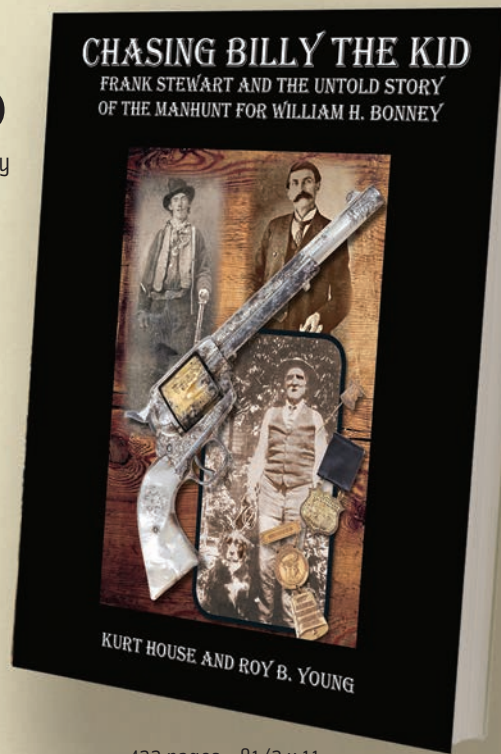
## New Book! CHASING BILLY THE KID

This fully-documented book, by historians Kurt House and Roy B. Young, relates for the first time the story of Frank Stewart and the chase-and-capture of Billy the Kid, culminating at Stinking Spring, and much, much more.

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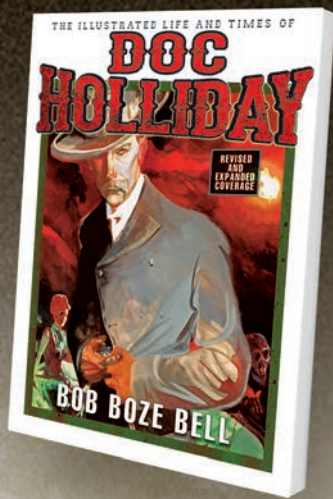
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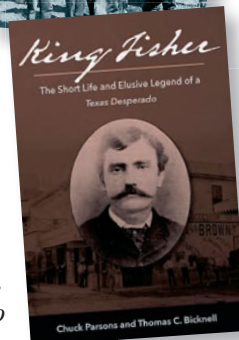
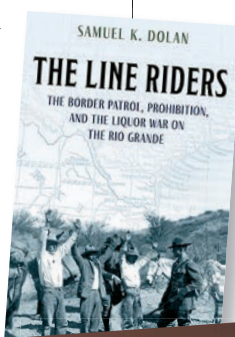


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### Riding the Border

National Prohibition created one of the bloodiest eras in the history of the American Southwest. And it was a case of the old meeting the new, saddle horses and Winchesters, on the one hand, and fast cars and Thompson machine guns on the other hand. It is also a little-known fact that drug smuggling began in earnest during this same period. Samuel K. Dolan does an excellent job of telling the story with an impressive amount of research and documentation in *The Line Riders: The Border Patrol, Prohibition, and the Liquor War on the Rio Grande* (Two Dot Publishing, \$29.95).

—Jim Wilson, former peace officer,  
 Texas sheriff and lifelong student of  
 Western history



### Lone Star Outlaw

In a follow-up to their 2018 biography *Ben Thompson: Portrait of a Gunfighter*, historians Chuck Parsons and Thomas C. Bicknell explore the story of outlaw John “King” Fisher who was an ally of Thompson’s. King first gained notoriety as a leader of rustlers in the Nueces Strip in southern Texas, where he and his gang raided American and Mexican settlements. He soon became a deputy sheriff in Texas, but his reputation and associations still haunted him. *King Fisher: The Short Life and Elusive Legend of a Texas Desperado* (University of North Texas Press, \$29.95)

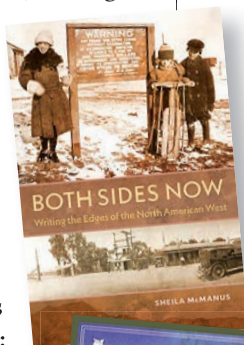
continues the tradition of the University of North Texas Press in publishing quality books on outlaws and lawmen.

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

### On the Edge of the West

Historian Sheila McManus presents a robust argument about borderlands history in her new book *Both Sides Now: Writing the Edges of the North American West* (Texas A&M Press, \$47). She argues that both the Mexican and Canadian borders offer unique challenges to historians in terms of understanding their geopolitics. In her book, she looks at several predominant themes within this realm of scholarship, including borderlands as aboriginal homelands; imperial efforts to create territory and identity; regulatory efforts working towards the movement of people and goods; and the cross-border identity which exists on either side of a border. *Both Sides Now* is an important book for historians writing on or looking to understand the relationship of Western borders.

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



### Survival of the Fittest

*Above the Llano* by Eric H. Heisner (Lean Dog Production, \$24.95) reads like a screenplay. The loose plot relies on the previous novel *Seven Fingers a' Brazos*, and author Heisner assumes whoever reads *Llano* undoubtedly has read volume one. Holton Lang, finishing an event in Texas, heads to his friend’s ranch in Arizona only to discover another friend, Bear, and a woman, fending off Missouri squatters. Comanches have raided homesteads in Texas, and Rangers are sent to retrieve the hostages. Captured, Jules sends Dog to get Holton clear over in Arizona. Remarkably, Dog succeeds. Meanwhile, Jules, held in a cave with other captives, breaks free, rescues a child while managing to avoid recapture. Fortunately, Holton arrives in time to assist the two Rangers who have now reappeared, and, in an exciting conclusion, the Comanches, Jules, Holton and the two Rangers fight.

—Melody Groves, author of  
 Before Billy the Kid



Courtesy Jon Armour

## LONE STAR STATE AUTHOR SHARES FAVORITE WESTERNS

**Jon Armour**, author of *Branded—The Most Notorious Cattle Rustler of Our Time*, is a Texas author who writes fiction across several genres and tells stories in a unique and imagination-capturing style. He has been featured in more than 18 publications and podcasts and was recently a finalist in the American Bookfest Awards. Living in Texas for more than 36 years, Jon has fallen in love with the state's lore, Western culture and the Lone Star lifestyle.

- ❶ **Fun and Games with Jesse James** by Don Walker (*McDonald County News-Gazette*): The 1938 movie *Jesse James* with Tyrone Power and Henry Fonda was filmed on the author's property. He wrote this book based on events around the small town of Pineville, Missouri.
- ❷ **True Grit** by Charles Portis (Simon & Schuster): Portis writes honestly and creatively to capture the essence of a young girl in a harsh Western depiction of lawlessness.
- ❸ **Lonesome Dove** by Larry McMurtry (Simon & Schuster): This iconic story spills out onto the Texas plains and all the way to Montana in a nail-biting saga of hardship, death and the harsh reality of the West.
- ❹ **Louis L'Amour** (Bantam): Any reads by this author are honest, factual renditions of the West.
- ❺ **Old Cowboys Never Die** by William W. Johnstone (Kensington): It's a flip on honest living for the sake of setting things right. A cowboy has to do what he has to do, and sometimes it's going to take you outside of the boundaries of the law.



## Western Toys from the Johnnie and Bob Terry Family Collection

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## DID YOU KNOW THE CITIZENS OF SIDNEY, NEBRASKA ONCE ASKED WILD BILL HICKOK TO BE THEIR HEAD LAWMAN?

In April of 1876, this famous gunslinger was sitting playing cards in what is now downtown Sidney. Two men started an argument with him, only to realize too late that they were staring down the pair of 1851 ivory-handled Colt revolvers.

In a second, he shot both men dead. After being found not guilty of murder by reason of self-defense, the citizens of Sidney asked Wild Bill if he would run against their corrupt lawman, "Con" McCarty. He declined the offer and headed off to seek his fortune in Deadwood.

Three months later, Hickok was sitting in a gambling hall in Deadwood, South Dakota when Jack McCall shot him in the back of the head. The bullet exited out the gunslinger's cheek, hitting another man at the table. When Hickok's body slumped forward, his cards fell on the table. Black Aces and Eights-- forever known as the deadman's hand.



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## Mescal Reborn

*The stories of Far Haven and the rebirth of an iconic film location are both tales of redemption.*



**B**eginning with the deadly nighttime ambush of a crew of drovers, *Far Haven* is a film replete with holdups, gunfights, brawls, good and bad lawmen, a lovely schoolmarm and all the things that make a Western a Western. Set in 1887, it centers around widower Hunter Braddock (Bailey Chase), fresh from prison, who's located his son and daughter at the home of his dubious

Left to right: A Martinez and Bailey Chase, both veterans of the long-running series *Longmire*, saddled up with Jesse Kove for the production of *Far Haven*, which was shot in 2022 on location in Southern Arizona at the Mescal Studio set.

All Far Horizon Images Courtesy INSP Films

in-laws (Bruce Boxleitner and Nancy Stafford), in the Arizona town of Far Haven. Braddock wants a second chance, and so does the town itself, for Far Haven is actually Mescal, the Western movie town built in 1969 for

the Lee Marvin classic, *Monte Walsh*. Countless TV episodes and nearly one hundred features have since been shot there, including *The Outlaw Josey Wales*, *Tombstone* and *The Quick and the Dead*.



The O.K. Corral set is just waiting for another Western production to return to Mescal and restore the location for a new Tombstone movie.

All Mescal Set Images Courtesy Henry Parke

But it's a tough time for Western movie towns, even with the resurgence of the genre. Paramount Ranch is slowly rebuilding after the 2018 fire, a contract dispute has stalled the reconstruction of Old Tucson, and the last of the Columbia Ranch has just been bulldozed. Mescal, once the poor stepchild to Old Tucson, had fallen into disrepair. Then in 2021, Kartchner Ventures took over Mescal, found sponsors like Ace Hardware and Dunn-Edwards Paint, put out the call for volunteers, and got to work on Mescal's much-needed rejuvenation. Film production is back, and in a big way.

*Far Haven* is the second Mescal-shot Western for Bruce Boxleitner in 2022; he'd recently wrapped *The Warrant—Breaker's Law*, also for INSP, distributed by Imagicomm Entertainment, but his Mescal history goes back to 1980. "The first time I ever saw Mescal was on *The Gambler*," the first of the films he co-starred in with Kenny Rogers. "The street looked about the same as now, minus that big brick saloon that *The Quick and the Dead* built." He'd be back a year later, starring opposite Marie Osmond in *I Married Wyatt Earp*. "When I did *Earp*, there was another whole street where the mountains are in back. The town looked bigger in *Tombstone*; they'd added a lot of trees and things on the street." In 1994, *Gunsmoke: One Man's Justice*, "was James Arness's last picture. They moved the Dillon ranch house to the other end of town with these big cranes." He enjoyed working on *Far Haven*. "I'm really impressed with Bailey Chase. He was just perfect for this role."

Chase, who played Deputy Branch Connelly on *Longmire*, and supporting characters on *Saving Grace* and *Buffy the*

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Veteran actor Bailey Chase stars as Hunter Braddock opposite Amanda Righetti as Miss Lilly Rayne in *Far Haven*, shot recently at the historic Mescal Studio south of Tucson, Arizona.

*Vampire Slayer*, is now the lead. "It is a bit surreal to be the number one guy, after not being it for a very long time," Chase said. "So, I'm very grateful for the opportunity."

Chase recalls, "I grew up in small-town Florida, with a single mom. I'd come home from school, watch TV; and Clint Eastwood Westerns always seemed to be on. So, not really having a father figure around, I just adopted him as my male role model and said, when I grow up, I want to be like that.

"I graduated from Duke with a degree in psychology, so I had fallback options. My very first job was *Married: With Children* as Lifeguard #2. I had one line. Then I'm on *Baywatch* and *Saved by the Bell*. I was just happy to be on TV." But Chase wanted to move beyond roles based on his face and physique, "So I went to London and did a Shakespeare

program at LAMDA [London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts]. It gave me a bit of craft, but also the confidence that I had a skill, [that] I was actually doing something. *As The World Turns* was great. That was bootcamp for me as an actor. They're shooting 70 pages a day, three cameras going, and they just throw you in the fire. I feel like that's where I really became a professional."

A Martinez, who plays Abraham Chavez, a blacksmith with a mysterious past, agrees. Unforgettable as Cimarron with John Wayne in *The Cowboys*, he's also a veteran of nearly 1,500 episodes of *Santa Barbara*. Although he hadn't worked in Mescal before, acting in Tucson was a homecoming for Martinez, whose first film, 1968's *The Young Animals*, was shot there. He was a shy kid in a UCLA improv class when casting director Fred Roos spotted him. "And



*Far Haven's* production used the saloon which was originally built in 1995 for the Gene Hackman and Sharon Stone Western, *The Quick and the Dead*.

he says, 'Hey, I'm looking for someone like you. You wanna meet this director?' And I'm thinking, this can't be legitimate. But it was true. It was amazing that it happened."

If *Far Haven* is a success, could it lead to sequels? Or a series? Martinez certainly hopes so. "I love this character. The whole cast is really strong, and this is a real good part for Bailey." It would be a real good part for Mescal as well.

## BLU-RAY REVIEW

### HOT SNAKE AND GUNS AND GUTS

(Vinegar Syndrome, Blu-Ray, \$24.99) While Spaghetti Westerns are plentiful, Mexican Westerns are rarely seen north of the border, and here is an interesting pair. *Guns and Guts* (1974) stars John



Wayne co-stars Jorge Rivero and Pedro Armendariz Jr., plus Rogelio Guerra as a trio out to get the same man—a criminal who has become a sheriff and turned a monastery into his fort. Full of Leone and Peckinpah influences, the best part is its hilariously violent opening sequence, with Guerra beating every man in sight for information. The most unusual element in *Hot Snake* is that the local bruja, or witch, holds the same exalted importance as the doctor in an American Western. The necrophile outlaw, the lawman, and everyone in between consult her throughout. ★

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

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BY PETER CORBETT AND THE EDITORS OF *TRUE WEST*

# THE TOWNS TOO TOUGH TO DIE

With foresight and determination, city leaders have worked hard for over a century to preserve our Old West history in the most famous Western towns.



The city of Tombstone, Arizona, has survived gunfights, fires, Indian wars, floods and the Great Depression, but its citizens have fought to save "the town too tough to die," and today it is one of the most popular Old West destinations in the country.

Historic Photo Courtesy True West Archives/  
Modern Photo Courtesy Cochise County Tourism

Some people rescue wild mustangs, wayward souls or soiled doves.

Then there are those inspired individuals with the foresight to rescue history before it escapes our collective memories.

These Top Ten True Western Towns are examples of places where history lives, and the spirit of the Old West is still alive thanks to crusaders like Edna Landin, who led an effort to save the 1882 Tombstone Courthouse and designate the town as a National Historic District.

Sharlot Hall was another rescuer of history in Prescott, where she served as Territorial Historian from 1909 until 1912.

Often, it's a collective effort to establish a historical society to preserve the vintage buildings, photos

and artifacts that tell the stories of how their towns developed.

We salute these rescuers and encourage readers to visit the Top Ten True Western Towns of 2023 to experience what they have preserved. Plus, put on your cowboy boots and stop in the other 40 towns where there's a whole lot of history happening.





Big Nose Kate's Saloon  
Tombstone, Arizona  
Courtesy Cochise County Tourism

## 1. TOMBSTONE, ARIZONA

Frontier justice was quick in Tombstone in the 1880s.

Five men were hanged March 28, 1884, at the Tombstone Courthouse for their part in a failed robbery and murder of four in the so-called Bisbee Massacre of December 8, 1883.

The mastermind of the holdup, John Heath, got a life sentence in Yuma Territorial Prison. But outraged Tombstone citizens broke Heath out of jail at the courthouse, got a rope and hung him from a nearby telegraph pole. Five weeks later, the others dropped to their deaths at the courthouse gallows, according to Curtis Miles, Tombstone Courthouse State Historic Park manager.

That violent tale is just one of many told at the courthouse, which is an essential stop in Tombstone. In addition to accurate portrayals of the O.K. Corral shootout, the state historic park has a recreated gallows outside the red brick Victorian building.

The courthouse was abandoned after the Cochise County seat moved to Bisbee in 1929, just as the Great Depression tanked the Tombstone economy. The town had already been suffering as mining declined over several decades.

But Tombstone soldiered on, earning its nickname “The Town Too Tough to Die.”

A less common Tombstone motto is: “The town that’s a museum and the museum that’s a town,” said Dr. Jay Davis Clark, a retired dentist and local historian.

“The big renaissance of Tombstone followed development of the motion picture industry and the invention of the Western film genre,” he said. “That

led to 40 or 50 Western-themed shows on three networks in the 1950s and ‘60s.”

Those movies and TV shows captured the attention of generations of viewers now drawn to Western outposts like Tombstone.

“It’s like living in a dream,” said Clark. “It’s like living your childhood fantasy, the thought that I can strap on a six-gun and walk down Allen Street in the footsteps of very famous people... I pinch myself every day.”

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

## 2. CODY, WYOMING

Buffalo Bill Cody’s *Wild West Shows* had a little something for everyone, so it makes sense that Cody, Wyoming, has plenty of Western experiences for its visitors.

It starts with five museums of the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, featuring Buffalo Bill Cody, Plains Indians, firearms, natural history and the Whitney Western Art Museum. But there’s more.

“Our outdoor recreation scene is coming in hot right now,” said Ryan Hauck, Park County Travel Council executive director.

“You have the options of 15 guest and dude ranches up and down the North Fork on your way to Yellowstone,” Hauck said. “You can go trail riding, fishing, stay in a customized log cabin and have Dutch oven cookouts or hike in the first national forest [Shoshone National Forest].”

Each evening at 6 p.m., Buffalo Bill’s 1902 Irma Hotel features a mock gunfight. The hotel dining room has a cherrywood bar Queen Victoria gave Buffalo Bill. They serve steaks, prime rib and whiskey bread pudding.

The historic Chamberlin Inn has the best cocktails in town and music on its patio in summer, Hauck said. Ernest Hemingway slept here and there’s a suite named for him with a typewriter, signed logbook and other appropriate decor.

The Cody Nite Rodeo kicks up dust summer nights with every event, including bull riding, barrel racing, team roping and bareback riding.

Cody Firearms Experience is an indoor gun range where guests can shoot everything from a black-powder rifle to an 1849 Colt Dragoon or a Gatling Gun.

[CodyChamber.org](http://CodyChamber.org)



Buffalo Bill Center of the West  
Cody, Wyoming

Courtesy BBCW



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Governor's Mansion, Sharlot Hall Museum  
Prescott, Arizona

Stuart Rosebrook

### 3. PRESCOTT, ARIZONA

A half century ago, one of Prescott's many Victorian-era homes was facing demolition to make way for a Jack in the Box restaurant.

But a grassroots campaign raised \$25,000 to move the 160-ton Bashford House, built in 1877, eight blocks to the Sharlot Hall Museum. It was restored two years later and sits near the Territorial Governor's Mansion, a modest 1864 log cabin.

"People here have always had that kind of appreciation for the history of Prescott and preserving it. That's just what makes it so special" said Kathy Mancino, sheriff of the Prescott Corral of Westerners International.

The 50-year-old Prescott Corral, with 225 members, is one of the largest groups of Westerners International, which was founded in 1944 and has 60 U.S. chapters and 20 abroad.

The Prescott organization, whose purpose is to preserve authentic Western history, is among a slew of groups and local museums celebrating stories of the Old West. That includes historical societies, Arizona Rough Riders, Whiskey Row Renegades, Prescott Regulators, Elks Opera House Guild and Yavapai Cowbells, a ranchers group established in 1949.

Prescott's museum scene is impressive for a city its size. It includes the above-

mentioned Sharlot Hall Museum, Phippen Western Art & Heritage Museum, Museum of Indigenous People and storefront Western Heritage Center on Whiskey Row.

"I like to promote everybody in town," Mancino said. "We all have different things to offer the public."

The 1916 Yavapai Courthouse Plaza is the hub of the Prescott visitor experience along with Whiskey Row. A monument honoring Rough Rider Buckey O'Neill graces the plaza.

Whiskey Row's most prominent watering hole is the Palace Restaurant and Saloon, which was rebuilt in 1901 after a disastrous fire leveled the 1877 saloon. The infamous Earp Brothers and Doc Holliday drank at the old Palace.

Doc's common-life wife, known as Big Nose Kate, is buried at the Prescott Pioneer Home Cemetery—just down the hill from Sharlot Hall.

[Visit-Prescott.com](http://Visit-Prescott.com)

### 4. CHEYENNE, WYOMING

If "Wyoming Starts Here," as Cheyenne's tourism slogan claims, where to start when visiting Cheyenne?

Cheyenne got its start as a railroad town when the Union Pacific tracks reached here in 1867. So, a first stop at the Cheyenne Depot Museum makes sense. The stately 1886 depot with its 118-foot clocktower is a National



Stuart Rosebrook

# WHERE HISTORY IS HAPPENING

## **Bartlesville, Oklahoma**

An 1897 strike launched an oil boom here. Check out a replica oil derrick and the Woolaroc Museum.

## **Bozeman, Montana**

History happens here with an ancient Western character, a T. rex skeleton at the Museum of the Rockies. Gallatin History Museum is in a converted 1911 county jail.

## **Carbon County, Wyoming**

Lots of bad-guy history is shared at the 1901 Wyoming Frontier Prison in Rawlins. Travel to Saratoga to enjoy the Hot Springs Resort.

## **Coffeyville, Kansas**

Colonel James Coffey started a trading post here in 1869. Decades later, locals killed four Dalton Gang members during two bank robberies here.

## **Fort Smith, Arkansas**

Fort Smith History Museum has a vast collection of artifacts. Don't miss the Fort Smith National Historic Site, which features a fort established in 1817.

## **Laramie, Wyoming**

See the 1872 Wyoming Territorial Prison where Butch Cassidy served a two-year sentence for buying a stolen horse.

## **Meeteetse, Wyoming**

This small town south of Cody has its own museums, including one featuring photographer Charles Belden, who documented life on the Pitchfork Ranch.

## **Reno, Nevada**

Reno's Nevada Museum of Art has a Western collection. The National Automobile Museum features cars and streetscapes from the early 20th century and a motorcycle exhibit.

## **Santa Fe, New Mexico**

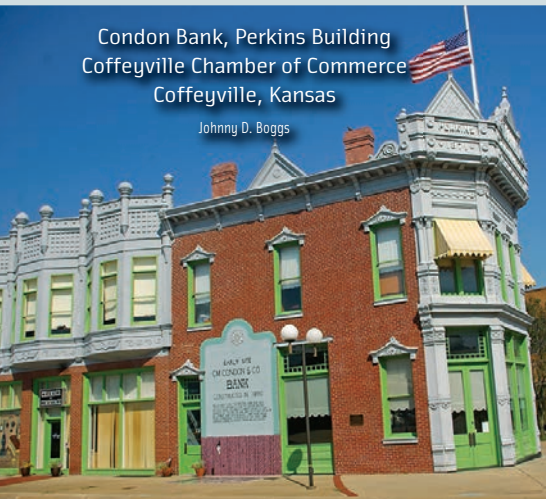
An exhibit at the New Mexico History Museum honors the 100-year history of Santa Fe's Indian Market. Another exhibit explores the legacy of the Fred Harvey Company.

## **Williams, Arizona**

Ride the Grand Canyon Railway to the national park, including special steam-powered runs on 11 dates in 2023. In town, enjoy the relics of Route 66 and the World Famous Sultana Bar.

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Historic Landmark. Exhibits include model trains and details on steam and diesel-electric locomotives.

Cheyenne had the largest steam-powered locomotives because of the steep grades to the west. One of the so-called Big Boy steam engines is displayed at nearby Holliday Park. The 1931 Union Pacific roundhouse is only open for tours during Depot Days, the third weekend of May.

The Wyoming State Capitol is another National Historic Landmark worth visiting. Self-guided tours are available weekdays. Construction of the capitol began in 1887 and was completed by 1890 when Wyoming became the 44th state, despite objections to it being the first state to allow women to vote.

Take a break from historic tours by trekking on the Cheyenne Craft Beverage Trail that includes four breweries and two distilleries.

Visitors in need of Western wear can get outfitted at the Wrangler, a three-story brick building that's been around since 1892. The massive store has a sky-lit room with hundreds of hats of



Cattle Drive, Front Street, Boot Hill Museum, Dodge City, Kansas  
Courtesy Dodge City, Kansas, CVB

all sizes and styles. See if a \$1,200 diamond-studded Stetson is your style.

In July, Cheyenne Frontier Days, billed as the World's Largest Outdoor Rodeo and Western Celebration, attracts as many as 250,000 spectators over 10 days.

Tourists might enjoy the Nelson Museum of the West, with exhibits on outlaws, lawmen and wealthy cattle barons who made Cheyenne the "Paris of the West." And the Cowgirls of the West Museum and Emporium features the history and legends of pioneering Western women.

[Cheyenne.org](http://Cheyenne.org)

## 5. DODGE CITY, KANSAS

Wyatt Earp and Bat Masterson were the real deal in Dodge City, but James Arness as Marshal Matt Dillon and Amanda Blake as Miss Kitty put the town on the map for millions of *Gunsmoke* viewers.

The long-running TV series was set in fictional Dodge City, while outdoor scenes were filmed at a set in Kanab, Utah.

Real Dodge City emerged in the 1870s as a wicked town where cowboys, weary from long cattle drives, drank, gambled and brawled.

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A newspaper editor in 1878 described Dodge City as “standing on the extreme border of civilization” and called the town “the beautiful, bibulous Babylon of the frontier.” Bibulous, for those not attuned to arcane adjectives, refers to the consumption of alcoholic beverages.

Townfolk here in Dodge no longer run and hide from the town’s wicked past.

“Dodge City [and Ford County] embraces the importance of our Western heritage, the cowboy, the gunfighter and the preservation of the pioneer heritage,” said Justin Wilson, marketing coordinator for Dodge City’s tourism bureau.

Dodge City celebrated its sesquicentennial last year, and Ford County will mark its 150th anniversary this year.

The Ford County Historical Society is set to open a new museum—the Ford County Legacy Center—as early as April.

One of Dodge City’s big draws is the Boot Hill Museum. Established in 1947, it was built on the site of the old cemetery. It has expanded greatly and now houses 60,000 artifacts primarily from the 1870s to the 1920s.



National Ranching Heritage Center  
Lubbock, Texas  
Stuart Rosebrook

The museum features a recreation of the Long Branch Saloon, which operated from 1874-85.

The big event of the summer is Dodge City Days, a 10-day celebration that features a parade, concerts, Western art shows, a longhorn cattle drive and a PRCA Rodeo.

[VisitDodgeCity.org](http://VisitDodgeCity.org)

## 6. LUBBOCK, TEXAS

This West Texas town is known for cotton, ranching and an early rock ‘n’ roll musician named Buddy Holly, Lubbock’s favorite son who died young in a 1959 airplane crash.

Hub City, as it’s known, has the Buddy Holly Hall of Performing Arts and

Sciences Center, a Buddy Holly Museum and a street named for Holly’s band the Crickets. Plus, Holly and bandmate Waylon Jennings, a country music outlaw, were the first inductees into the West Texas Walk of Fame.

The WOF honors Roy Orbison, Tanya Tucker, Western Swing legend Bob Wills and 90 other musicians and entertainers. It’s in the Buddy and Maria Elena Holly Plaza.

History lovers will find interesting museums here to learn about life in the Old West. The American Windmill Museum has 170 rare and restored windmills and boasts of being the world’s largest windmill museum.

The Museum of Texas Tech University

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Days of '76 Parade  
Deadwood, South Dakota  
Chad Coppess, Courtesy South Dakota Tourism

has 7 million objects in its collection with exhibits on illustrator N.C. Wyeth, Southwest Indian art and Texas Tech's centennial in 2023.

The National Ranching Heritage Center is a museum and 27-acre historical park on the university campus. It has an exhibit on the scripts, props and costumes used for the TV series *1883*, the origin story for *Yellowstone*. Don't miss the Summer Stampede with artists selling sculptures, jewelry and gear—spurs, stirrups, bits and knives.

Texas Tech is a hub of Hub City. A

famous alum was Henry John "Dutch" Deutschendorf Jr., better known as singer-songwriter John Denver. He dropped out in 1961 to pursue his music career.

One of Lubbock's big annual events is the National Cowboy Symposium and Celebration in September. It features storytelling, music, a horse-themed parade and a chuck wagon cookoff.

Visitors might consider a stay at the modern Cotton Court with the adjacent Midnight Shift restaurant near Lubbock's Depot Entertainment District.

[VisitLubbock.org](http://VisitLubbock.org)

## 7. DEADWOOD, SOUTH DAKOTA

The news spread across the country in August of 1876 that Wild Bill Hickok was murdered in a Deadwood saloon when Jack McCall "put a pistol to his head and blew his brains out," as reported by the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*.

The well-known scout, lawman and gambler was buried in the town cemetery with an inscription cut into a large stump at the grave: "A brave man; the victim of an assassin—J.B. Hickok (Wild Bill) aged 48 years; murdered by Jack McCall, August 2, 1876."

Today, nearly 150 years later, reenactors in Deadwood perform *Trial of Jack McCall* in nightly performances.

Visitors can pay their respects to James Butler Hickok at the Mount Moriah Cemetery on a plateau overlooking Deadwood Gulch. His remains were moved to this graveyard in 1879. Martha "Calamity Jane" Canary was buried next to Wild Bill after her death in 1903.

Deadwood was a boomtown in the Dakota Territory after gold strikes in the mid-1870s brought thousands of prospectors to stake claims.

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# EXPERIENCE COWBOY CULTURE



Main Street Cattle Drive, Bandera, Texas

Barbara Shanle, Bandera, Texas, CVB

## Amarillo, Texas

Horse lovers won't want to miss the American Quarter Horse Museum. In nearby Canyon, visit the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, which boasts of being the largest exhibitor of Texas history in the Lone Star State and includes a replica Pioneer Town.

## Bandera, Texas

Bandera is home to the Dixie Dude Ranch, Mayan Dude Ranch, the Old Spanish Trail Cafe, Bandera General Store and Arky Blue's Silver Dollar honky-tonk.

## Casper, Wyoming

Time your visit for the College National Finals Rodeo June 11-17. Dress the part by shopping at Lou Taubert Ranch Outfitters, selling boots, hats and Western wear since 1917.

## Cave Creek, Arizona

Go honky-tonkin' at Harold's, see bull riders at the Buffalo Chip or find the Hideaway, a weekend hot spot for Harley iron horse riders.

## Elko, Nevada

How could you not visit the Cowboy Arts & Gear Museum, in the former Garcia Saddle shop or the Western Folklife Center across the street?

## Miles City, Montana

The Range Riders Museum includes the Fort Keough officer quarters, a Charles Russell Gallery and 1,200 arrowheads in a 1942 log building.

## Pendleton, Oregon

Pendleton Woolen Mills, established in 1909, offers weekday tours. The town is also known for the Pendleton Round-up, a top rodeo, and its related Happy Canyon show depicting settlement of the West.

## Ruidoso, New Mexico

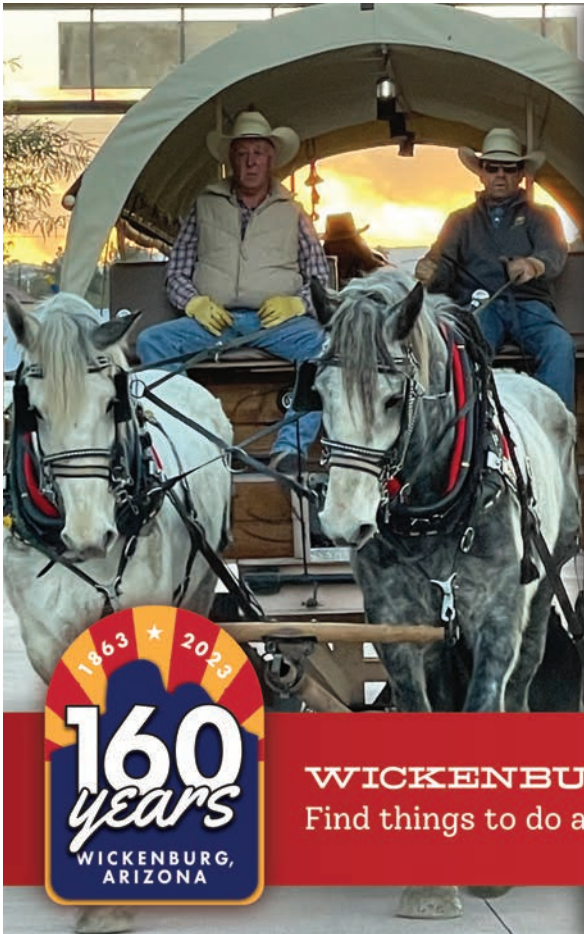
Ruidoso Downs hosts quarter horse racing on summer weekends and an All American Cowboy Fest in the fall. Billy the Kid Casino will satisfy your gambling jones year-round.

## Sheridan, Wyoming

Sheridan Cowgirls Association stages barrel racing and goat roping in the summer. The Brinton Museum in nearby Bighorn features Western and American Indian art.

## Wickenburg, Arizona

Team roping and dude ranches are big draws in Wickenburg. The former mining town's history and Western art are featured at the Desert Caballeros Western Museum.



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Trinidad History Museum, Trinidad, Colorado

Courtesy Gates Frontiers Fund Colorado Collection within the Carol M. Highsmith Archive, Library of Congress

Deadwood is a National Historic District that celebrates its roots with the Days of '76 celebration in late July. It features a parade of horse-drawn carriages, Native American dancers and a PRCA Rodeo.

"Deadwood strives to be the most authentic it can be and does a wonderful job of it," Deadwood Chamber of Commerce spokeswoman Robin Carmody said. "We hear this from visitors in all seasons."

Wild Bill Days, June 15-17, include concerts, gold panning lessons and other events.

Deadwood visitors can ride in stage-coaches, take walking tours of the historic

town and learn about its history at the Adams Museum, Days of '76 Museum and The Brothel Deadwood Museum.

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

### 8. TRINIDAD, COLORADO

The Santa Fe Trail brought travelers through Raton Pass and what became Trinidad, Colorado, starting in 1821.

The challenging Mountain Route through the 7,834-foot pass was less popular than the Cimarron Cutoff to Santa Fe. Eventually, Trinidad emerged as an important town along the rugged Sangre de Cristo Mountains of south-eastern Colorado.

Trinidad was settled around 1860. The town incorporated in 1876, two years before the Santa Fe Railroad built its main line from Colorado into New Mexico.

Famous lawman Bat Masterson, who served a year as town marshal, kept a lid on violence in the frontier town in 1882.

Coal mining emerged as a principal industry, and the town prospered. That's evident in a walking tour of Trinidad's historic business district and stately Victorian homes.

"It's an enchanting little town," said Kris Miller, Trinidad Tourism Board member.

But coal mining led to one of the ugliest chapters in American labor history with the 1914 Ludlow Massacre of striking miners and their families. A massacre memorial is a dozen miles away in Ludlow, and Trinidad has its own Southern Colorado Coal Miner Memorial and Museum.

Modern Trinidad celebrates its past at the Trinidad History Museum. It has the Baca House, an 1870s adobe, the 1882 Victorian-style Bloom Mansion and a Santa Fe Trail Museum.

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The A.R. Mitchell Western Art Museum is one of the best in the West. It features a vast collection of the work of Arthur Roy Mitchell, whose illustrations of cowboy life were featured in dozens of Western pulp magazines.

More contemporary Trinidad attractions include the long-running Trinidad Blues Festival in late August and the Art Cartopia Museum of art cars that are wildly decorated. A big art-car parade is staged in September.

“Trinidad loves a parade for almost any reason,” Miller noted.

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

## 9. ABILENE, KANSAS

Abilene’s frontier roots are tied to the Chisholm Trail with cowboys driving Texas Longhorn cattle to the town’s railroad spur starting in 1867.

That led to illicit behavior—gambling, prostitution and violence.

“Imagine being out on the trail for days, weeks, months and then the cowboys got paid in Abilene,” said Julie Roller Weeks, Abilene Convention and Visitors Bureau director. “So then lots of unsavory things were happening.”



Old Abilene Town Stage, Abilene, Kansas

Courtesy Abilene, Kansas, CVB

Wild Bill Hickok was hired as town marshal in 1871 to tamp down the gunplay of the rowdy cowboys. He ended up shooting an intoxicated bar owner in front of the Alamo Saloon and then mistakenly shooting his own deputy. Both men died.

Hickok was forced to move on, but the legendary scout, lawman and gambler is still remembered in Abilene. The 78th annual Wild Bill Hickok Rodeo is set for August 1-4 in Abilene.

Old Abilene Town has a recreated Alamo Saloon with the back bar from the original saloon. The townsite also includes historic cabins, schoolhouses and churches from Dickinson County.

The Dickinson County Heritage Center features a history museum, telephone museum and the C.W. Parker Carousel National Historic Landmark. Plus, it’s adjacent to the Eisenhower Presidential Library, Museum and Boyhood Home.

A new attraction is touted as the World’s Largest Belt Buckle—just shy of 20 feet wide and 14 feet high. Abilene also has a giant spur at Rittels Western Wear shop and a series of four-foot-high painted cowboy boots around town.

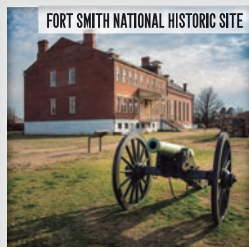
“We try to give visitors new things to see and do to celebrate our history,” Roller Weeks said.

[AbileneKansas.org](http://AbileneKansas.org)

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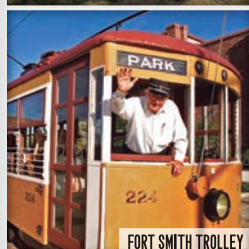


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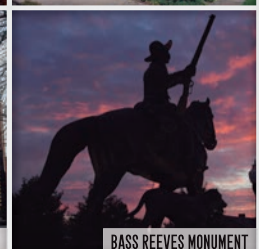
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# WHERE HISTORY LIVES

## Bodie, California

This ghost town 200 miles east of Sacramento is protected by Bodie State Historic Park with limited access in the winter.

## Buffalo, Wyoming

In the foothills of the Big Horn Mountains, Buffalo is home to the Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum with 15,000 artifacts from the Old West.

## Clifton, Arizona

The massive open pit mine here is one of the world's largest, and Clifton's historic district is a time warp.

## Converse County, Wyoming

Fort Fetterman was abandoned in 1882, but its history is preserved at this state historic site with a restored officer's quarters and ordnance warehouse.

## DeSmet, South Dakota

See the homestead where Laura Ingalls Wilder got her inspiration to write *Little House on the Prairie*.

## Dubois, Wyoming

The National Bighorn Sheep Center exhibits full-size taxidermy mounts and shows films on Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep.

## Durango, Colorado

Many visitors come to ride the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, but the town also features a charming historic district.

## Grass Valley, California

This Sierra foothills town includes the Empire Mine State Historic Park and the North Star Mining Museum.

## Kingman, Arizona

Route 66 gets a lot of attention here, but the Mohave Museum of History and Arts and nearby ghost town of Chloride are worth a visit.

## Medora, North Dakota

This historic city is the gateway town to Theodore Roosevelt National Park. Summertime is best to tour the local historic sites and attend the ever-popular *Medora Musical*.

## Muskogee, Oklahoma

Book a long weekend and spend your time touring the Five Civilized Tribes Museum, Three Rivers Museum, Oklahoma Music Hall of Fame and the Ataloo Lodge Museum.

## Placerville, California

See the historic downtown, the Fountain-Tallman Museum in an 1852 building and tour the Gold Bug Mine.

## Santa Clarita/Newhall, California

Like the Hollywood Walk of Fame, the Walk of Western Stars honors film legends John Wayne, Roy Rogers, Dale Evans and others.

## St. Joseph, Missouri

Relax in the historic city's downtown and tour the Pony Express National Museum, the Robidoux Row Museum and the Patee House Museum and Jesse James Home.



Jesse James Home Museum, St. Joseph, Missouri  
Courtesy St. Joseph, Missouri, CVB

## Scottsbluff/Gering, Nebraska

Visit Scotts Bluff National Monument and Chimney Rock National Historic Site, landmarks on the pioneer trails.

## Sidney, Nebraska

The Fort Sidney Complex includes the Commander's Home and Married Officers' Quarters, which houses the Cheyenne County Museum.

## Taos, New Mexico

Tour the galleries on Taos Plaza and see Taos Pueblo, with its origins dating to at least A.D. 1500.

## The Dalles, Oregon

Visit the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center & Museum to learn the importance of the Columbia River to life here.

## Virginia City, Nevada

Ride the Virginia & Truckee Railroad to Gold Hill and tour Virginia City, the town made famous by *Bonanza*.

## Wallace, Idaho

The town's Mine Heritage Exhibition is an outdoor museum at a riverfront park. You'll want to see the Oasis Borello Museum.

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## 10. SAN ANGELO, TEXAS

“San Angelo! Well picture, if you please, a plucky, enterprising and progressive city of 17,500 of the best citizens of Texas,” is how the town was described by C.H. Tupper of the *San Angelo Daily Standard*.

That was in 1909 when San Angelo was excited about the Kansas City, Mexico & Orient Railroad building a depot in town for its international railway headquarters.

Today, San Angelo has 100,000 residents and the restored train depot is the Railway Museum of San Angelo, one of many attractions in the 20-acre cultural district south of the Concho River. That includes the San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts and the Fort Concho National Historic Landmark, plus, the San Angelo Visitor Center, which is a good place to start when exploring this city.

The Railway Museum, which was saved from the wrecking ball in 1989, has preserved San Angelo and Texas railroad history in the two-story red brick building.

San Angelo has also benefitted from preserving 23 of the garrison's buildings at Fort Concho, established in 1867. Its collection of 20,000 historical items includes relics from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The fort was deactivated in 1889.

San Angelo Stock Show and Rodeo, established in 1932, is a major livestock show in February. Its rodeo was nominated in 2022 for the PRCA Large Indoor Rodeo of the Year honors.

The Cowboy Gathering, which celebrates cowboy life and Western swing music, is set for September 8-9. This past year featured Billy Mata and the Texas

Tradition with keyboard star Floyd Domino, who played with Asleep at the Wheel and on five George Strait albums.

Another historic spot in San Angelo is Miss Hattie's Bordello Museum in an 1896 building. It operated for a half century until the Texas Rangers shut it down in 1952. Miss Hattie's had a secret tunnel to allow guests to surreptitiously visit the house of ill repute.

***DiscoverSanAngelo.com***



**Peter Corbett** had a 35-year career in Arizona journalism after earning an English degree with an American Studies minor at Northern Arizona University. He has explored the West since moving to Flagstaff in 1974.

Fort Concho Frontier Day  
San Angelo, Texas

Courtesy San Angelo, Texas, CVB



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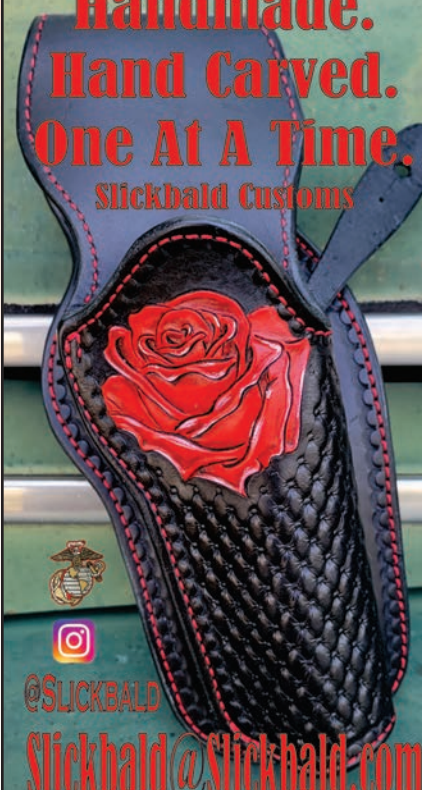
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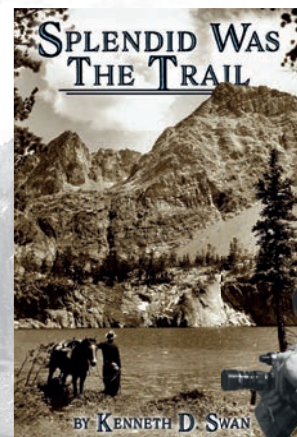
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# WESTERN ROUNDUP

FOR FEBRUARY/MARCH 2023

## ANTIQUE SHOWS

### VINTAGE TULSA SHOW

Tulsa, OK, February 17-19: Shop a wide selection of antiques from some of the region's most prominent and professional collectors. 918-619-2875 • [HeritageEventCompany.com](http://HeritageEventCompany.com)

### 101 RANCH WESTERN MEMORABILIA SHOW

Blackwell, OK, March 24-25: Showcased are ranch and Western memorabilia for viewing and for sale: firearms, cowboy gear, spurs, saddles, Miller family items, rare photos, posters, ephemera, books, artwork, coins, clothing and Oklahoma museum pieces. 580-307-5076 • [GoldSpur101@gmail.com](mailto:GoldSpur101@gmail.com)

## ART SHOWS

### WINGS OVER THE PLATTE RIVER

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

### WESTERN SPIRIT ART SHOW AND SALE

Cheyenne, WY, March 11-April 23: This juried art show showcases professional artists from around the United States. 307-778-7290 • [OldWestMuseum.org](http://OldWestMuseum.org)

### COWGIRL UP! EXHIBITION & SALE OPENING WEEKEND

Wickenburg, AZ, March 31-April 2: Cowgirl Up! is a crossroads where artists, collectors and art enthusiasts come together to explore what it means to be a Western artist. CU! artists ride the range of techniques, styles and mediums, traditional and contemporary. 928-684-2272 • [WesternMuseum.org](http://WesternMuseum.org)

## BIRD-WATCHING FESTIVAL

### CRANE WATCH FESTIVAL,

Kearney, NE, March 19-25: More than 500,000 sandhill cranes migrate to the Platte River Valley during their northward migration. 800-652-9435 • [VisitKearney.org](http://VisitKearney.org)

## BOOK FESTIVAL

### TUCSON FESTIVAL OF BOOKS

Tucson, AZ, March 4-5: Mark your calendars and save the date for another in-person, community-wide celebration of literature held on the University of Arizona Campus Mall. As always, the festival is free of charge for all attendees. 520-621-0302 • [TucsonFestivalOfBooks.org](http://TucsonFestivalOfBooks.org)

## COWBOY ACTION SHOOTING

### END OF TRAIL

Phoenix, AZ, February 27-March 5: The World Championship of Cowboy Action Shooting, End of Trail, is held at the Ben Avery Shooting Facility in Phoenix. The Arizona Territorial Company of Rough Riders are the hosts of the SASS World Championship. 623-582-8313 (Ben Avery Shooting Facility) [EndOfTrail.org](http://EndOfTrail.org)

### 74TH GOLD RUSH DAYS AND SENIOR PRO RODEO

Wickenburg AZ, February 10-12: This event celebrates Wickenburg's origins as a ranching and gold-mining center. The heritage event was founded 74 years ago, and today Gold Rush Days draws tens of thousands of visitors during the three and a half days of activities. 800-942-5242 • [WickenburgChamber.com](http://WickenburgChamber.com)

True West's Bob Boze Bell is a regular participant in Wickenburg's Gold Rush Days Parade.

Courtesy Wickenburg Gold Rush Days



## HERITAGE FESTIVALS

### ARIZONA RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL & ARTISAN MARKETPLACE

Gold Canyon, AZ, February 4-April 2: Revel in the atmosphere of 16th-century Europe in a 50-acre festival village with a cast of nearly 2,000 colorfully costumed characters. 520-463-2600 • [RenFestInfo.com](http://RenFestInfo.com)

### BATTLE OF THE ALAMO COMMEMORATION

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

### BUFFALO SOLDIER HERITAGE DAY

San Angelo, TX, February 26: Join the Fort Concho Buffalo Soldier Living History Unit as they honor the nation's Black troops. 325-657-4440 • [FortConcho.com](http://FortConcho.com)

### BUFFALO BILL BIRTHDAY BASH

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

### GOLIAD MASSACRE REENACTMENT

Goliad, TX, March 24-25: The occupation of Fort Defiance and the 1836 Goliad Massacre are recreated, with a memorial service on the last day. 361-635-3752 • [PresidioLaBahia.org](http://PresidioLaBahia.org)

## ICE FESTIVAL

### CRIPPLE CREEK ICE FESTIVAL

Cripple Creek, CO, February 18-26: Watch sculptors carve ice into works of art, plus enjoy a liquor luge, ice snacks, an ice slide and ice maze. 877-858-4653 • [VisitCrippleCreek.com](http://VisitCrippleCreek.com)

## MUSIC

### JAM SESSIONS AT THE OCCIDENTAL HOTEL

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

## PARADES

### ARIZONA PARADA DEL SOL HISTORIC PARADE & HASHKNIFE PONY EXPRESS

Scottsdale, AZ, February 4-5: The Parada del Sol Historic Parade has been a tradition since 1953. The streets of Old Town Scottsdale welcome over 30,000 spectators and nearly 150 parade entries marching down Scottsdale Road. 480-990-3179 • [ScottsdaleParade.com](http://ScottsdaleParade.com)

## POETRY GATHERINGS

### LONE STAR COWBOY POETRY GATHERING

Alpine, TX, February 17-18: Don Cadden, Dave Stamey, Jill Jones, the Jingle Bobs and others celebrate the oral and musical traditions of the American West. 432-216-2167 • [LoneStarCowboyPoetry.com](http://LoneStarCowboyPoetry.com)

## STOCK SHOWS & RODEOS

### SAN ANTONIO STOCK SHOW & RODEO

San Antonio, TX, February 9-25: The event features PRCA and ranch rodeo competitions, livestock shows and country music concerts. 210-225-5851 • [SARodeo.com](http://SARodeo.com)

### SCOTTSDALE ARABIAN HORSE SHOW

Scottsdale, AZ, February 16-26: Since 1955 the Annual Scottsdale Arabian Horse Show has grown from 50 horses to nearly 2,400 horses. Owners, trainers and breeders from around the world compete. 480-515-1500 • [ScottsdaleShow.com](http://ScottsdaleShow.com)

### CINCH TIMED EVENT CHAMPIONSHIP

Guthrie, OK, March 8-12: The best hands in professional rodeo compete at the Lazy E Arena in five timed rodeo events. 800-595-7433 • [LazyETec.com](http://LazyETec.com)

### WINNEMUCCA RANCH HAND RODEO

Winnemucca, NV, March 1-5: The Ranch Hand Rodeo is the largest and most exciting in Nevada. Thirty teams compete for bragging rights and prizes in saddle bronc riding, steer stopping, wild mugging, trailer loading, team roping, ranch doctoring and team branding. 775-623-2220 • [RanchRodeoNV.com](http://RanchRodeoNV.com)

TWMag.com:

View Western events on our website.



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

# Mules, Levi's and Chuckwagons

## Can horses really run themselves to death?

*Marie Johnson  
Dallas, Texas*

Horses can run themselves to death even without a rider. A horse can die of dehydration, heart attack and exhaustion if not rested periodically. Horses can run fast only so long, depending on the conditioning and the breed. Quarter horses are bred for shorter distances, while Arab horses are noted for endurance.

Mules have a more complex reasoning ability. They'll quit before they drop.

## What happened to the chuckwagons at the end of the cattle drive? Did they sell them or drive them back home? Did the cowboys go back to their home states?

*Wayne Sturgill  
Crofton, Kentucky*

At the end of the trail, the cattle were sold and the cowhands were paid, the cowboys headed for the mercantile store for some new



General George Crook was famous for riding the hearty and surefooted mule in the Army's desert and mountain campaigns against the Yavapai and Apache Indians of the Southwest.

True West Archives

clothes, got a shave, haircut and had a bath. Then they headed for the saloons and the good time girls for a couple of days. The cook stocked the chuckwagon, then the trail boss and the hands headed back to Texas and waited until spring to do it all over again. Chuckwagons were too valuable to discard.

## In almost all portrayals of Old West killings, if witnesses said the killing was in self-defense, the lawman dropped the matter. Is this accurate?

*Ray McCoy  
Gulfport, Mississippi*

Yes, that's pretty much the way it was. Nearly everyone packed a pistol, so it was easy to claim self-defense, especially if you could afford a defense attorney. A man could shoot another in the back and claim he felt threatened. It helped if you were a resident in the locale where it occurred and the man who died was a stranger in town. Coroners' juries tended to be more liberal towards people they knew.

## Where did the term "heeled" originate?

*Jim Foreman  
Ninety Six, South Carolina*

It seems to have originated in the "sport" of cockfighting: A well-heeled cock was provided with sharp spurs that could inflict maximum damage on its opponent. From this came the American frontier slang sense of being armed.



At a large roundup near Belle Fouché, Dakota Territory, two chuckwagons serve up grub to hungry cowboys.

John C. H. Grabill, Courtesy Library of Congress



In Warner Brothers' *Stagecoach* (1939), John Wayne famously wore his too long "wear to fit" Levi Strauss 501 jeans cuffed to keep them from dragging in the mud and dirt.

Courtesy Warner Bros.


### If there were no belt loops in the 19th century, how did cowboys hold their jeans up?

Neal Hathaway  
Durango, Colo.

Lynn Downey, former historian for Levi Strauss, says, "We first put belt loops on our 501 jeans in 1922. However, we didn't remove the cinch and the suspender buttons. If you bought original 501s, you had to figure 1- to 2-inch shrinkage at the waist and in the length. The trick, though, was to buy 'em at waist and length that fit right...and then wear 'em in the ocean or, if you were landlocked, wear 'em while soaking in a bath of warm water and lots of salt. The jeans would shrink somewhat to your body, but they'd then 'stay' at that size."

### I recently visited Tombstone and the site of the famous gunfight. I never realized just how small the empty lot was. Is that accurate?

Gordon Shubert  
Kansas City, Kansas

Yep, the fight was up close and personal. There were about 18 feet between Fly's and the Harwood house, and the lot was a bit deeper than that. The two sides were as close as 6 feet apart before they spread out. Some 30 shots were fired in a space of about 30 seconds. Only about 1/3 of the bullets hit someone. That shows what adrenaline and moving targets can mean in a shootout—that distance between the participants doesn't always mean much. 

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# What HISTORY HAS TAUGHT ME



Photo by Bob Boze Bell

**Growing up** in Tyler, Texas, was great. We had many friends in our neighborhood, and we could walk to school. The times then were simpler and freer—there weren't the concerns that we have today for children.

**For me, music** is a source of joy, comfort and remembrance. Early introduction was to Glenn Miller, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong and others. Later, music became so much more—an amazing experience during an amazing time.

**My father** talked a lot about integrity, loyalty and honesty. He and our mother were always welcoming to our friends, and we had a few friends who, due to problems at home, lived with us for a while through the years.

**The best advice** my mother gave me was to be true to my beliefs and be accepting of others. Many of our friends continued to visit her through the years after my brother, Bill, and I left Texas.

**One of my earliest memories** of Bill is when he was around five, and I was about three. We were at our Aunt Maude and Uncle Dick's house in the country (we called it Bugscuffle). We were playing in a stream and saw a water moccasin in the water about six feet away. Bill got between me and the snake and got us out of the stream and up the embankment.

**When we were older**, Bill and I would go to concerts and movies together. My first big concert was in 1964 with Bill to see the Rolling Stones in Dallas.

**I am** a sucker for a lost dog or cat (see photo, at right!). I have seen a few lost or injured birds, bats, squirrels, dogs and cats through the years and have always sought homes or help for them (sometimes keeping them, too).

**When I think** of all that I've learned since meeting Bob Boze Bell and working at *True West*—the thing that stands out most of all is that without people like BBB, Bob McCubbin, Dan Harshberger, Ken, Mark, Candy, Gus, Stuart and his dad Jeb, Marshall Trimble, Robert Ray, Beth, Ericka, Rebecca, Jana, Bob Alexander, Fred Nolan, Paul Hutton, Johnny Boggs and countless others sharing information found, going to locations where historic events took place, reading many sources about these events and the people who took part and sharing it—we wouldn't have an idea of how these events unfolded and how we came to be where we are.

**When I flew to Oklahoma** to learn the ropes, it was pretty daunting. I had three days to train with the previous office manager, Linda Matheson. It took quite some time to sort things out after that.

## CAROLE COMPTON GLENN, *TRUE WEST* BUSINESS MANAGER, 1999-2022

As general manager of this magazine, Carole Compton Glenn reigned supreme as the heart and soul of *True West* for over two decades until her retirement last October. In addition to her business management of the magazine, spearheading payroll and paying writers, she also acted as liaison with our subscribers. She invariably handled countless calls about mailing problems and damaged magazines with a kindness and generosity that will never be topped, much less duplicated. Needless to say, she will be missed by the entire staff and all of our contributors, who loved her, and by the many readers she helped along the way. *We love you, Carole!*

**I'll never forget** the time when two very large moving trucks arrived in Cave Creek with issues, furniture and equipment (delivered from the previous offices in Stillwater, Oklahoma), and there was only enough room to accommodate maybe a third of one of them at our headquarters, a rambling house in the wash behind the Goatsucker Saloon. It was Bob McCubbin who named it "Clantonville."

**Our first year** was a challenge.

**The toughest** part of my job was that there were a few times of uncertainty.

**The best part** of working at *True West* was the amazing people I worked with and observing the creative process.

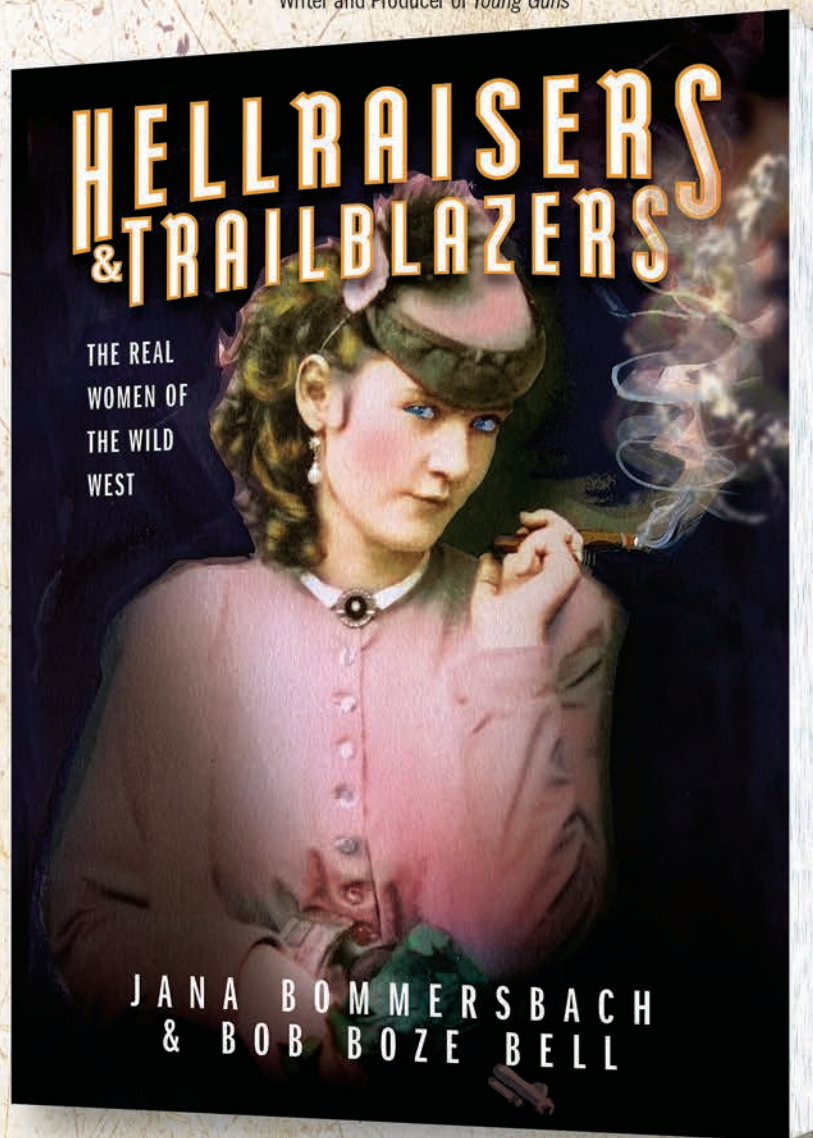
**Wish I had a penny** for every time a subscriber said how much they love reading *True West*, that they look forward to each issue and when it comes, they sit and read it cover to cover.



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*Bisbee, Arizona is a mile high in the scenic Mule Mountains. Just a scenic drive away from Tucson and Phoenix. Bisbee offers the best year-round climate you'll find anywhere. Come enjoy our rich history and Discover Bisbee.*

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*Mine Tours • Electric Bike tours and rentals • Jeep and Golf Cart tours  
Dining Options • Entertainment • Museums and MORE*

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