

Saddlebag Newsletter

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A supplement to the *WWHA Journal*
Available On-Line via www.wildwesthistory.org

Welcome to the *Saddlebag* Newsletter. Here is the latest information from WWHA. Previously posted Saddlebag newsletters will be found by date further down this section in the list of available newsletters. All earlier information will be retained for reference.

If you have Wild West news, please contact the editor at the e-mail address shown at the top of the *Saddlebag* page. We reserve the right to include or not include any materials submitted to us.

April 24, 2023

WWHA Journal – June 2023

The June 2023 issue of the *WWHA Journal* will feature the first of a two-part series by Richard “Dick” Derham on Dave Rudabaugh as well as fine articles by James and Margaret Bailey, “Arizona Gold Dredging Relic Discovered in North Carolina,” Erik Wright, “From Bandit to Folktale: An Analysis of Outlaw William Brazelton as El Tejano,” Mike Koch, “Bloodshed on the Streets of Leonardville,” Frank Abrams, “Finding Old Bill Williams,” and more.

Every member will receive, in the June mailing, a copy of the official Roundup program. For now, the “Roundup Schedule” is available on the WWHA website.

ROUNDUP NEWS

The 16th Annual WWHA Roundup is fast approaching, set for July 12-15, 2023, at the world-famous Menger Hotel in San Antonio. The Menger is taking guest room reservations now. Ask for “Wild West History Association” guest room rates for a considerable discount.

Address: 204 Alamo Plaza, San Antonio, TX 78205

Phone: (210) 223-4361

The Roundup program, subject to tweaking, is now posted on this website. Look at all the great programs that are planned. Every member will receive a printed copy in the June mailing.

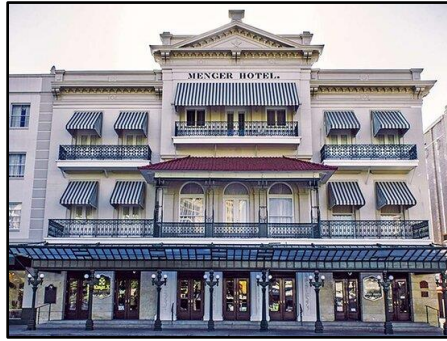
The Roundup registration form is now available on the WWHA website: www.wildwesthistory.org. The form may be submitted directly from the website to our treasurer, Jean Smith, or downloaded and mailed. Additionally, a copy of the registration form appears in the March *WWHA Journal* and may be copied and mailed with appropriate fees.

The Vendor form and information on selling or displaying at the Roundup may also be obtained on the website.

WWHA

SAN ANTONIO ROUNDUP

July 12-15, 2023 - Menger Hotel



The Menger Hotel

**** The Roundup Registration Form is available on the website ****

Speakers and Programs:

Steve LeSueur – “The Murders of Frank LeSueur and Gus Gibbons by the Wild Bunch”
Thomas Bicknell – “San Antonio’s Fatal Corner” – John Boessenecker – “Frank Hamer”
Donna Harrell – “Peace and Tragedy: The Outlaw Younger Brothers Life in Texas”
Dave George – “Bet-A-Million Gates” - Kurt House – “Phil Shardein”
Mike Cox – “History of the Texas Rangers” – Harold Weiss – “Captain Bill McDonald”
Gary Ohls – “Showdown at Langtry, Texas, 1896” – Madison Harrell – “Matthew Caldwell”
Paul Marquez – “Juan Seguin” – Chuck Parsons – “King Fisher”
Victoria Wilcox – “Doc Holliday in Texas”
James Bailey – “Forensics of the Shootout at the Vaudeville”
Bradley Nevill – “O.C. Hanks” - Bill O’Neal – “Rip Ford”

Panel on Texas Rangers – Harold Weiss, John Boessenecker, Mike Cox, Chuck Parsons

“An Evening With....” Featuring one of WWHA’s prominent historians

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Opening Reception at the Buckhorn Saloon

Six-Shooter Awards Luncheon

Gunfighter Members Luncheon

“Boots & Spurs” Banquet with the annual silent and live auctions and entertainment featuring Gunfighters and Gamblers, plus “The Gambler and Lady”

Special Menger Hotel Tours Available

The Menger Hotel has a historic tour of this historic property that they can provide. Roundup attendees can sign up for the tour that will take place early on Friday afternoon. The tour guide at the Menger is willing and ready to give a great tour. The Menger recommends groups of max 30 people for a 30 or 40 minute tour. More than one group can be arranged if needed. No charge for this but gratuities are appreciated.

WWHA Roundup Auctions

Please bring any auction donations to the San Antonio Roundup. Or, if you cannot attend the event, please send to Ruth McWhirter, Auction Chair, 1548 Pecan Ridge Drive, Collierville, Tennessee, 38013. Please notify her in advance of shipping at lilyruthmcw@gmail.com.

Another Old-Timer Gone



WWHA regrets to announce the passing of James "Jim" Miller Jr., former president of Western Outlaw-Lawman History Association (WOLA) and a member of the WWHA Denver Roundup Planning Committee. The tall, lanky "Jim," as he was known to all, was a formidable presence at Wild West meetings all across the American West. Not only was he a recognized authority on the "Wild Bunch," but a talented painter whose works were often exhibited at WOLA meetings. WWHA extends its sympathy to Norma, Kathy, Alice, Christine and Heidi and all of the Miller family.

James (Jim) Owen Miller Junior passed away **March 8, 2023**, at the age of 88, peacefully with whispers of "I love you" in the air. Born in northwestern Texas on October 11, 1934 and a baby of the dust bowl, he was a product of strong work, loyalty and family and it showed in his every

demeanor.

As a child his family moved to Parachute, CO which happened to be the spot where Kid Curry stole a rowboat from the Parachute Train Robbery of 1905. This began a foundation of love and dare we say, a near obsession of the Wild West and its outlaws and lawmen, which followed him throughout his life.

The family moved to Grand Junction, after Jim graduated from Grand Valley High School in 1954. In 1958 he met and married Norma and also joined the Army, 82nd Airborne, where he proudly served 3 years. He worked for 38 years with Mountain Bell retiring in 1991.

In 1964 he joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. He was a great man of faith who loved his Heavenly Father and his Savior Jesus Christ. He served his church in many capacities and offices, especially through the Scouting program and received the Silver Beaver for his contribution to scouting.

His passion and fascination for the Wild West led him to volunteer and serve on the board of directors for Western Outlaw and Lawmen Association, eventually becoming the association's president. Giving lectures and lessons all over the country as he gained notoriety for his historical

knowledge. This led to him being asked by the University of Wyoming University to lecture on “Wild Bunch” topics.

Jim loved family, especially Norma, his sweetheart of 65 years. He also loved art and painting beautiful works that he usually gave to friends and family that became dear treasures. He loved popcorn with lots of butter. And because of this his home always smelled of oil paints and popcorn, to the chagrin of his wife.

He was a fantastic story teller and in reading stories written by Jim we found that he wrote of funny moments, happy moments, family moments, and so many stories of cowboys of old. To quote Jim in one of his stories; “All in all it has been a good life”.

Jim is survived by his sweetheart and wife Norma Miller, sister Susan Marie, daughters Kathy Lange, Alice Young (Dan), Christine Miller (Taher) and Heidi Miller; 11 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren and numerous nieces, nephews, family and friends.

Proceeded in death by, his parents, Bettye and James Owen Miller Sr, his younger brothers John Miller, and Rick Miller Sr. and his grandson Troy Young.

Services were held on Friday, March 17th at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints at 2888 Orchard Avenue, Grand Junction. Burial services with full military honors were conducted on April 10th at 1:00pm at the Veterans Cemetery at 2830 Riverside Parkway, Grand Junction.

Subscribe to the WWHHA YouTube Channel

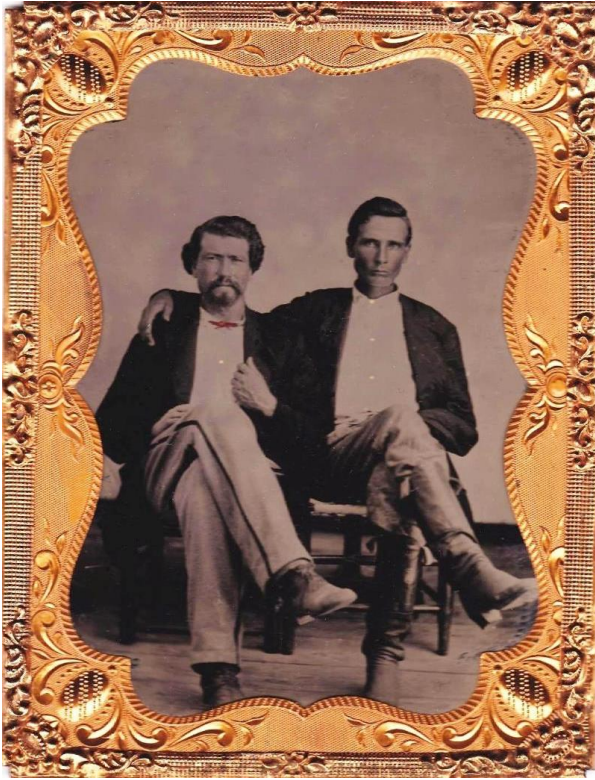
<https://www.youtube.com/c/wildwesthistoryassociation> (free) and you will be notified when each of the new videos listed below is released. Upcoming videos:

Who Killed Johnny Ringo; Bass Reeves 1883 Mini Series; Captain Sam Walker and the Battle of Walker Creek; Dead Man's Hole; Tombstone Hills and the Clanton Ranch; The Great Comanche Raid; Ash Upson, The Man Who Invented Billy the Kid; Black Bart, The Gentleman Bandit; A Last Serenade for Billy Bonney; The YO Ranch Headquarters; Child Captives of Comanche and Apache Indians; Scott Cooley, Comanche Indian Fighter; Calamity Jane; Outlaw O.C. Hanks Headstone Dedication; Brown Bowen Hanged by Mistake?

Wild West History Association’s “Team Upson” Cleans Up Grave of Brown Bowen – Submitted by *Chuck Parsons*

It was inevitable that the WWHHA “Team Upson” would continue its important work of finding, marking and cleaning of lost or near lost graves of famous or forgotten Wild West characters. This latest venture into preserving history produced results March 8 when a small group met at the final resting place of Joshua Robert “Brown” Bowen in Gonzales County, Texas and cleared his woefully over-grown grave. It came as an accumulation of decades of finding, marking and now cleaning. The workers were Pam Potter, Kurt House, Don Hoffman, Eddie Lanham and Chuck Parsons.

The story actually begins when Brown Bowen murdered young Thomas J. Haldeman in 1872 as a tragic incident as part of the Sutton-Taylor Feud. A group of young men had gathered at the Billings’ store/saloon in rural Gonzales County. No one knows what the reason for the celebration was but it involved gambling, horse racing and drinking – lots of drinking. Among the revelers were Brown Bowen, John Wesley Hardin, his cousin John Gibson Clements, Thomas J. Haldeman and perhaps others of the Clements clan.



**Brown Bowen (right) and friend
Thomas Caffall in early 1870s**
(Photo courtesy Chuck Parsons with touch-up
work by William A. Mills)

On December 17, 1872, one of those rough young men drank too much of that Billings store liquor and felt drowsy. That was no problem as a soft spot under a tree would suffice for a nap. This is what Thomas J. Haldeman did to “sleep it off.” Then – while Haldeman slept either Brown Bowen or John Wesley Hardin sauntered up to the sleeping man and shot him in the head. Why? It was believed that Haldeman was a “spy” for old Joe Tumlinson who was actively involved in working against the Taylors who were feuding with the Suttons. No one has been able to explain what Tumlinson could have gained and how he could have spied on the Taylors – if not to plan an ambush.

Thomas J. Haldeman was dead; within a day or two his corpse was taken to Old Davey Cemetery – also known as the Salt Creek Cemetery, located on the Karnes-DeWitt County line, and buried.

Within days Bowen was arrested; some writers have indicated that J.W. Hardin informed Haldeman’s father that Bowen had killed his son. The entry in the State Police record book shows the following for December 1872, in part: Sergt. Thomas L. Patton “is making arrangements to secure the arrest of Brown Bowen charged with murder . . . is investigating the murder of Thos. Holderman [*sic*].”

We don’t know what investigative method Patton used to arrest Bowen but he ended up in the Gonzales County jail. Bowen actually hired attorneys to defend him – which could have been inconvenient and costly. Not wanting to chance the outcome of a trial, Bowen decided to fight for justice in another manner.

Adjutant General William Steele wrote this about the situation:

In Gonzales county there is a strong band of thieves and murderers, headed by John Hardin, alias Wesley Hardin, alias Wesley Clements, who is reported to have committed sixteen different murders. . . On the twenty-sixth day of March [1873] this man Hardin, with a squad of twelve men, all armed with Winchester guns and six- shooters, rode into the town of Gonzales, and delivered the county jail of all its prisoners, threatening the guard with death if he made any alarm The sheriff of Gonzales county informed me that he had made no effort to arrest any of these parties, that the citizens will not answer his summons, and that the outlaws would be released, even if caught and placed in Gonzales jail.

This statement from Adjutant General Steele is included in his annual report to the Governor. We don’t know who comprised the “squad of twelve men” who rode with Hardin that day, but

probably the four Clements brothers (first cousins of Hardin), E.J. or J.W. Glover – both of whom would sign a treaty of peace, one or more Taylors, maybe Fred Duderstadt and George Culver Tennille. Hardin had freed his brother-in-law from *in durance vile*.

Bowen later claimed that before long he left Texas for Florida where he arrived on September 12, 1873 to hide among relatives. John Wesley Hardin in the meantime continued his violent life-style until May of 1874 when he and several companions killed deputy sheriff Charles M. Webb in Comanche. The citizens of Comanche with Texas Rangers reacted violently to the extent that Hardin too was forced to leave Texas for Florida. In Florida, he associated frequently with Brown Bowen – primarily because Hardin had married Brown Bowen's sister Jane and during his "fugitive years" became a father of three.

Things went well for the two fugitives. Back in Texas the Texas Rangers were still endeavoring to locate Hardin's presence; three years after Webb's killing the reward for Hardin was \$4,000. Rangers determined where he was probably hiding out and thanks to the railroad Texas law descended on Pensacola, Florida – the sole object of their visit was to "Get Wes Hardin" or, Brown Bowen, who now had a reward for his capture amounting to \$500.

On August 23, 1877 Hardin was captured in Florida and then delivered to the Travis County jail in Austin. A few days later Bowen was captured and was safely delivered to the same jail. Ultimately Hardin received a sentence of twenty-five years for second degree murder and delivered to Huntsville State Prison. Bowen was found guilty of first degree murder and sentenced to hang. The hanging was to occur in Gonzales on May 17, 1878. The sentence was appealed but the sentence was affirmed. Bowen now could prepare to meet his maker. Part of the sentencing was as follows:

It is ordered adjudged and decreed by the court that the defendant Brown Bowen be taken hence by the sheriff to the county jail of Gonzales County and that he be there safely kept until the (17th) seventeenth day of May AD 1878, and that upon said 17th day of May 1878 within the hours prescribed by law, the said defendant be taken by said Sheriff to a gallows prepared for that purpose within the walls of the county jail of Gonzales County, if it is so constructed as to permit of it, if now at some suitable place within the county of Gonzales, and that said defendant be then and there hanged by the neck until he is dead, dead, dead.

Sheriff Alonzo T. Bass did as ordered and Bowen was hanged, denying with his last breath that he had not killed Haldeman but that Hardin did. Bass was not going to let any incident mar the event, as he had Deputies G.H. Bruton and John R. Lewis to assist as well as Ranger Captain Lee Hall and a number of Rangers watching the crowd.

One reporter described the final moments, after Bowen assisted in adjusting the noose, which gives Bowen a degree of heroism: "Bowen stood erect, and, with a fixed, stern gaze, looked down on the crowd, with most of whom he was acquainted. He showed no sign of fear or weakness in this supreme moment. He was Brown Bowen, the defiant.

Exactly when a headstone was placed at Bowen's grave is unknown but the original was the typical three foot vertical headstone placed in a "key slot" base. The original stone originally provided the bare dates of his life; no mention of the shortened name of Joshua Robert "Brown" Bowen, only the "Jo,." shortened. which read: Sacred to the Memory of Jo. Bowen Born 9- 27- 1849, Died May 17, 1878, 28 Y 5 M 26D.

Through the years the tall headstone became loose from its base and broken; times changed and what may have been the Bowen family grave yard became a stockman's pasture with cattle

roaming among the stones. In 1977 this writer visited Texas for the first time and among the necessary stops was the court house to visit Genevieve Vollentine, the county historian. Wanting to visit the grave of Bowen among a few other historic notables I was introduced to Norman Barnett, long time Gonzales County resident and knowledgeable unofficial county historian. Barnett and I visited the Bowen home place and discovered the broken headstone. We gathered up the pieces – some seven or eight and delivered them to the Old Jail Museum in Gonzales. Today there is a “Hardin Room” where the pieces of Bowen’s original stone are safely kept, along with photos and displays relating to Hardin, the Clements family and others.

On August 8, 1985 a replacement stone and fence was erected at the site by Nelda Patterson and the Smiley Junior Historians of Gonzales County. Then – in turn, the replacement stone and fence was overgrown and difficult to access – as if Mother Nature wanted full control. Thorny mesquite and tasajillo had nearly overgrown the site. The stone was nearly illegible, the fence was bent and broken in places but through the efforts of Donald D. Hoffman – author, historian, writer of Nixon, whose intense interest in all things related to Hardin and Gonzales County – WWHA’s “Team Upson” discovered where the Bowen grave is located. A visit to the grave resulted in the decision to clean up the site. As of March 8, 2023 the grave of Joshua Robert “Brown” Bowen has been cleared and the headstone cleaned. No longer is the grave of Brown Bowen lost.

Photos below are courtesy of Chuck Parsons, Eddie Lanham and Pam Potter, unless otherwise noted.



Brown Bowen Gravesite before the clean-up



Kurt House with chainsaw to cut mesquite trees inter-grown with fence



Eddie Lanham and Ron Hoffman working to fix the fence around the grave site. At left, Pam Potter, Chuck Parsons, Kurt House taking a respite from the heavy work.



Brown Bowen Grave Site after the clean-up

East Texas Historical Association – Call for Papers, 2023 Fall Conference

The East Texas Historical Association invites proposals for papers and sessions for its 2023 annual fall meeting to be held in Nacogdoches, TX, at the Fredonia Hotel on October 5-7, 2023.

Topics that cover all aspects of East Texas's regional heritage and history receive some preference, but any proposal that deals with Texas history, along with the people of Texas and Texas culture, is welcome. The Association prefers the submission of complete sessions (presider and three presenters or presider/commentator and two presenters), but individual submissions are also encouraged. We particularly welcome graduate and undergraduate students who organize and propose sessions. The Association annually awards the Portia Gordon Best Student Session Award. Each member of the session awarded the prize will receive \$100. Please visit our website at <https://www.easttexashistorical.org/> for full details.

All session and individual proposals must use the submission form found on our website at <https://www.easttexashistorical.org/conference>. The Association welcomes innovative formats for sessions, including discussion panels, poster presentations, or forums, as well as traditional paper sessions.

The East Texas Historical Association, headquartered on the campus of Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas, is committed to the preservation and enhancement of East Texas's great historical heritage. For more information visit our website or call 936-468-2407.

Deadline for Submission: May 1, 2023. Presenters will be notified of acceptance by June 5, 2023. Please make all submissions electronically using the proposal form located on the Association website.

Send all proposals to Program Chair, Dr. Bernadette Pruitt at his_bxp@shsu.edu. P.O. Box 5223, SFA Station | Nacogdoches, TX 75962 office@easttexashistorical.org | 936.468.2407

Millions of Patents - and Potential Relatives

Google Patents allows searches by types of inventions; dates; patent holders; and key words. The advanced search page is at patents.google.com/advanced. Included are U.S. patents since the establishment of the U.S. Patent Office, and patents from some European and Asian countries.

Even if you don't have an inventor in the family, a relative might have been involved as an investor, partner, lawyer, or other role.

Patent records are in the public domain. Files, some with drawings and descriptions, which are very interesting for historical inventions. For instance, Abraham Lincoln obtained a patent in 1849 for "buoying vessels over shoals". He hoped it would help free steamboats stuck in shallow North American rivers, but the system was too heavy and complicated for real-life use.

By David A. Norris, Internet Genealogy author

Editor Search

With the coming retirement of our long-time WWHA Publications Editor Roy B. Young taking place at the end of 2023, as announced in the March *Journal*, we have begun an “editor search.”

All interested parties with a background in producing high-quality publications are invited to contact WWHA for particulars about the various responsibilities involved in the role of publications editor.

Contact:

**Jim Dunham, WWHA President
and Editor Search Committee Chair at:**

1876jim@gmail.com