

# WESTERNER

THE NUMBER ONE WESTERN CULTURE MAGAZINE



WESTERNER CELEBRATES HALLOWEEN  
WITH TONY SPERA, THE STORY BEHIND  
THE CONJURING, SLEEPY HOLLOW,  
SALEM AND OTHER TERRIFIC  
TERRORS....

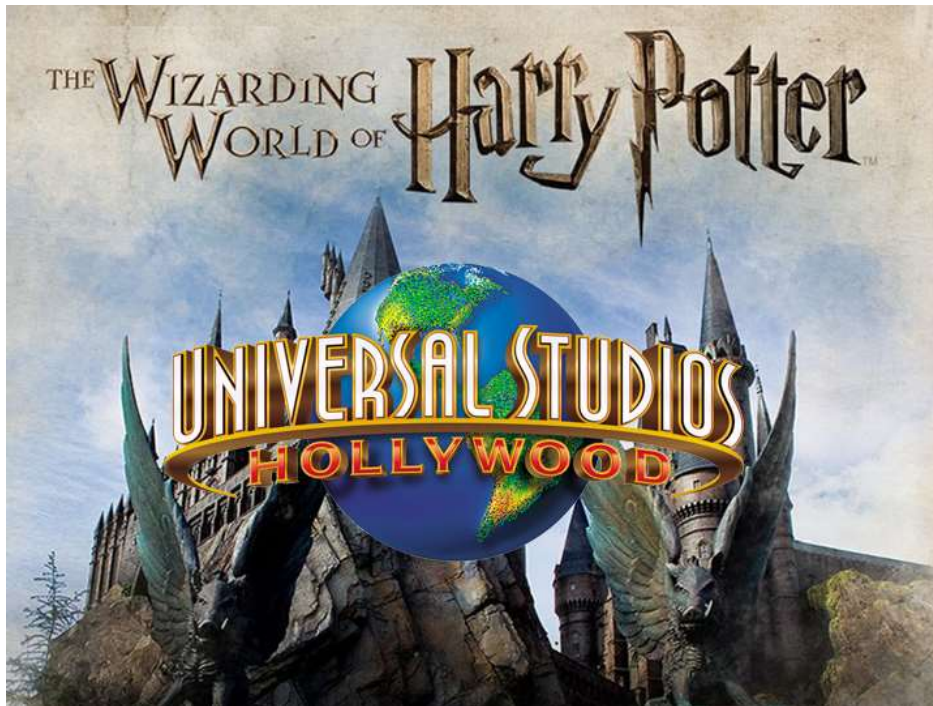


# THE WESTERNER©

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SPONSORED IN PART BY THE WIZARDING WORLD OF HARRY POTTER AT UNIVERSAL STUDIOS, IN A CONTINUING EFFORT TO KEEP THE WESTERNER© FREE FOR OUR READERS.



## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



*Editor Bruce Bennett sits at Ed Warren's desk.*

Dear Readers,

Most of us enjoy a good scare. Halloween gives us a fun chance to pretend we're something we're not.

Ghosts, goblins, witches, werewolves, vampires, and fantastically frightening creatures can be found on every American street corner one night per year. My question is, *Where are they the rest of the time?*

This edition of the Westerner© focuses on the dark side. You'll find our latest publication to be scary, fun, and informative. We take the chance to visit some of the spooky, fun, and historical places with great stories and history.

Our feature is on the legacy of Ed and Lorraine Warren, who have been popularized in film and literature. This fascinating pair of demonologists and paranormal investigators were active in the 1960s and 1970s when they investigated such famous cases as the Amityville House and the Enfield Haunting.

Tony Spera, Director of the New England Society for Psychic Research, gave me a glimpse into the life and work of this famous pair, now archived in a small museum in Connecticut. Though the museum is currently closed, due to local zoning regulations, a virtual tour can be found at <http://www.warrens.net/Occult-Museum-Tours.html>.

I had the previous opportunity to visit with Tony and view some of the objects in the museum's collection. The most infamous, and perhaps the most frightening, is the doll that is best known as Annabelle. Other interesting items include a devil worship statue found in the nearby forest and the conjuring mirror.

Tony offers periodic exhibitions, which allow enthusiasts to see a few items up close and also features a delightful presentation on his work. For more information on the next appearance, please check out the website at <http://www.warrens.net/An-Evening-with-Annabelle.html>.

We're proud to present our *Things that go bump in the Night* issue.

Once again, we hope you like what we have to offer.

Please write us at [dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com](mailto:dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com) with your comments and opinions.

BB

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Thanks for all of the great responses from our readers on our last issue. We've had such an overwhelming amount of emails that we can only print a few. Here are some of the representative comments regarding our first magazine of Fall 2017:

Dear Westerner:

I saw Charley Pride back in St. Louis in 1968. Most people my age were listening to the Beatles or the Rolling Stones, but my first love was country. Back then, there were real country greats who changed the way country is done today.

Charley Pride wasn't only a pioneer in music, he was a unique individual who blazed his own path. Your article not only captured those halcyon days of guitar twanging greats, but also showed how this great singer still thrills audiences today.

Thanks for the story on one of the real pillars of modern country. I'd like to read more stories about this period of time and the artists who made it great. I love your magazine and can't wait for the next issue.

Bob Johnson, La Grange, TX

*Mr. Johnson,*

*Thank you for your kind email. Nick Wale thoroughly enjoyed interviewing Charley*

*and found him to be a fascinating individual. We'll try to continue to ferret out those good stories. Perhaps you can suggest a few people you'd like to read more about?*

*BB*

Dear Sir or Madam,

The article on Big and Rich was terrific. Most people don't know much about them, but I've been a big fan for many years. I plan on seeing them in Branson this year, which will be the fifth time I've seen them.

Today's country music is on the rise and there are many stars who you could interview. I think you're doing a great job with country as well as including other types of music. I'm in my forties and don't remember some of the people you've interviewed, but I really enjoy your magazine.

Would it be possible to interview some old sports stars? Maybe some of the greats from the 1970s or 1980s? It would be fun to hear about professional sports then versus today. Keep up the good work.

Larry K. Tazewell, VA

*Dear Larry,*

*Thanks for the vote of confidence. I don't know many sports stars from that time*

*period, but the idea seems like a good one. Perhaps we can work on it and get back to you?*

*BB*

Dear Sirs,

I'm a real fan of the articles by Fred Staff. As a history buff, and especially history of the west, I find his writing to be interesting. His thoughts are right on the mark and I want to make sure that you will continue to publish his articles.

I've read some of his books also and plan to read more. I liked the western top ten you included in the last issue and bought a couple of those also. You guys are

doing a great job and I know that I, for one, am going to become a big fan of your magazine.

Sincerely,

Kel B. St. Joseph, MO

*Dear Kel,*

*I guess it's the month for compliments. When we started this magazine, we wanted to promote the reading of Westerns. It's certainly branched out from that original idea, but we like to stay true to our roots. Fred is a regular part of the magazine, and we'll look to continue publishing his interesting articles.*

*BB*

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# NEWS OF THE BOOK WORLD



**WITH JOHN WALT HOLMES**

The latest news from the Western book world delivered directly to you via Westerner.

## **Happy Anniversary to a Dusty Saddle**

Dusty Saddle Publishing is celebrating its anniversary this month with a brand new box set of their best performing Western novels of 2017. The aptly titled “Anniversary Boxset” is currently climbing the charts and features titles from Robert Hanlon, M. Allen and John D. Fie, Jr.

## **The M. Allen Cowboy Breakthrough**

“Rifleman” from M. Allen has broken into the top one hundred. This is the third release from this exciting author, and with a new Western novel hitting the market later this month, it looks like the success train will continue running.

## **Fie to Release a New Western Novel?**

Dusty Saddle Publishing announced that they would be issuing a new John Fie Western. Fie, who has dominated the charts for much of 2017, will likely make a welcome return to the top 100 bestselling Westerns in America. Previous Fie bestsellers “High Plains Ambush,” “Gunfight at Benson’s Creek,” “Pressor: United States Marshal” and “Pressor’s Hunt” have been collected together in a new box set called “Six Gun Justice” in anticipation of his new release. The set is available now as an e-book from Amazon.

## **Watts Brings Home the Artistic Bacon**

Top selling Western author David Watts has been busy writing a new poetry book! His first Western poetry release will hit the market later this year! But don’t fret—those

who love his action-packed Westerns need not worry. There's a new Western novel coming out later in October.

### **Halloween Hits the Success Spot**

For the first-time, Western authors will have Western releases themed around Halloween. Fred Staff and Bruce G. Bennett will both release Halloween-themed Westerns for the holiday season. Both books look set to be hits.

### **The Outlaws Publishing Dilemma**

Outlaws Publishing, one of the largest Western publishing houses, and the home of Paul L. Thompson, announced a re-organization of the company. Instead of having one imprint, they will now have three imprints with three separate advertising campaigns. Outlaws Chairman J.C. Hulsey explained last week, "It's important for our company to keep growing and distributing our Western catalog fairly among our distribution channels. The launch of these imprints will allow us to really make the most of our vast catalog."

### **Six Bullets to Sales Success for Dusty**

Dusty Saddle Publishing will release the sixth volume of their popular "Six Bullets to Sundown" series this month. The sixth book in the series will feature brand new stories from Fred Staff, Bob Yoho, Randall Dale and others. With the last five volumes achieving bestseller status, this new collection looks likely to please Western readers around the world.

### **The Best Randall Dale Western Since...**

"The Captain's Coat" from Randall Dale has already achieved two rave reviews from his competitors! Paul L. Thompson and Robert Hanlon have both scrambled to write rave editorial reviews for the book--but is it any good? Resident Westerner reviewer Lon Hamilton has described it as "the finest Western of the year so far." The book, a Civil War drama, has certainly excited those in the business. You'll be seeing it soon on the bestseller lists.

### **Mister William Vlach to Pen a Western?**

Rumors are circulating that William Vlach, popular author of "Father Coffee," will be penning a Western. Sources are tight-lipped at the moment, but Vlach did let slip that the book would be an interesting foray into the Old West. With Vlach, anything is possible.

### **"Gunsmoke" Jim Byrnes Writes Westerns?**

A new release from "Gunsmoke" television writer Jim Byrnes has been exciting Western readers across the United States. The first book in his "Heller" Western series was a surprise to those who follow the genre. It combines the best of TV writing and novel writing and certainly hits the spot. Check it out—"Heller" is available now on Amazon.

### **Wyatt Birthing a New Western?**

It was announced earlier last week that D.G. Wyatt would be following up his successful collaboration with Robert Hanlon. How will he be following it up? With a brand new Western story. His brand new Western will be

released later this month and looks likely to be well received by the readers who loved his work with Hanlon. "I just want to please readers," Wyatt said to me. "It's in my DNA to make readers happy. The stories have to be great—to please a great readership."

### **The Hulsey/ Harris Signing**

It has now become common knowledge that J.C. Hulsey signed Scott Harris to one of the new subsidiaries. Harris who was hotly tipped to be signed by one of the Western publishing houses just released his new book "Coyote Creek," which is currently racking up sales on Amazon. He looks likely to be another success for Hulsey—the man with the golden touch when it comes to Westerns.

### **Cobb Rivals Staff?**

Fledgling author Douglas Cobb has stepped into Western territory with a new book about Bass Reeves. With readers already feasting on four books on Reeves by Staff, it will be interesting to see if this new effort from Cobb makes the grade. "I don't mind the competition," Staff said to me. "As long as the history is told correctly." "Crossing the Dead Line" is available now on Amazon.

### **Let Us Pray Together**

Dusty Saddle Publishing is set to release a new book called "The Pistol Preaching Preacher" from an author they have not yet disclosed. Two chapters of the book will be made available online in early November. This new book will form a new series about a preacher who takes the law into his own hands after his flock is murdered by a gang of vigilantes.

### **Western Sales at All Time High?**

Western sales are currently at their highest point in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With hit Western novels from authors such as Paul L. Thompson, Robert Hanlon, Fred Staff, and Bruce G. Bennett, this trend looks set to continue. When will Hollywood notice and start making Westerns again? Talented folks like Mark Baugher are reporting that the movies made of their Western novels are seeing increased sales and viewership—maybe it's time for Hollywood to take notice of the trend?

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# TONY SPERA UNLOCKS THE WORLD OF ED AND LORRAINE WARREN



*Tony Spera with Westerner© Editor, Bruce Bennett... and Annabelle*

Bruce: The dog's barking.

Tony: I don't know why. Maybe because I ran for the phone. We're out of power here, so I have to use my battery powered radio phone.

Bruce: You're out of power?

Tony: It just went out about fifteen minutes ago.

Bruce: Where do you live?

Tony: Connecticut. It's a perfect day out here, no breeze; the power just went out.

Bruce: It's a nice day in Pennsylvania also.

Tony: I called the power company and was told it would be back on in about two hours. We lose power when there's a gentle breeze. We lost power about thirty times since the nineties, and I finally bought a generator.

Bruce: That's what happens when you fool around with those spirits.

Tony: [Laughs] Yeah.

Bruce: They get in the wires, you know?

Tony: [More seriously] That's probably part of it. That's what happens when you want to explain the supernatural. They always want to let you know they're around. In this instance, the power went out right before you called.

Bruce: Back in 1976, when I was going to college, I went to see the Warren's lecture and thoroughly enjoyed the presentation. I don't know if you've ever seen that lecture. Back then, they had a slide show and made the presentation with slides.

Tony: Let me stop you there and ask a question. Is this the lecture in which the president of the college appeared, or no? Because Ed told me that he was giving the lecture at your college and there was a spirit who appeared near the stage. Was that the same lecture?

Bruce: The way I heard the story was that either Ed or Lorraine felt the presence and then, later on, they had a private session and were able to contact him. I think he was laid out in Old Main Hall when he died some years before. After that, the hair always stood up on the back of my neck when I had to be in there alone.

One picture everyone really freaked out about was the Raggedy Ann doll. They warned people they might want to look away, but everyone was skeptical and most watched. Some really had a bad reaction to the slide.



Tony: That's a scary doll. It's one of the worst items we have in our museum. Ed got the doll back in 1971 from nurses who lived in an apartment complex in Hartford, CT.

Bruce: Tell me how you first got involved with the Warrens.

Tony: I started back in 1980, but I first met Ed and Lorraine back in 1979. I was working as a cop, in the town of Bloomfield. In August or September of that year, I was sitting in my cruiser when this brown station wagon went by. In the station wagon was this young, beautiful lady. She smiled and waved to me.

I, being a fine, red-blooded American cop, decided I better follow her and find out what her story is. By the time I caught up with her, she'd already parked the car and went into a dress store located at a strip mall. I pulled in front of the dress store to see if she was in there. Then she came to the window and I waved. She gave me a funny wave back and went back in the store.

Ten minutes later, I get a call on the radio from another police officer. He says, "Can I meet you somewhere?"

So I went to meet him. When I pulled my cruiser next to his, he rolled down the window and said, "Did you just see a girl in a brown station wagon wave at you?"

I replied, "How did you know that?"

He said, "She just called me looking for you because she thought I was you. I know who she is."

I asked, "Really? I'd like to meet her."

That night, we go to a local fried chicken place. I met her and asked her on a date. That went well, and about three dates later she

asked me if I'd like to see her parents' lecture at the University of Connecticut. I asked her if they were professors, and she replied that they were lecturing at Jorgenson Auditorium. She told me they were the Warrens.

I was interested in going, so we go to the auditorium, to the green room in the back, where Ed was playing with the slides. Lorraine was sitting comfortably, having a cup of tea. That's when I first met them.

A few weeks later, I was invited over for dinner and began to discuss Ed's work with him. I asked about devils and demons, and he spoke about the cases he worked. He answered my questions on Amityville and I began to learn.

I wanted to go on cases with him, but he said I wasn't ready. Instead, I helped him with lectures by running the slide projector. I absorbed everything he said during the lecture and afterwards in the Question and Answer session.

Finally, I began to go on cases with him. That's how I started.

Bruce: Who was the girl?

Tony: My wife, their daughter, Judy.

Bruce: Lorraine is living still. How is her health?

Tony: She's 90 now. Her health is good but she's getting forgetful. I've taken over for her; we have the New England Society for Psychic Research (NESPR).

Bruce: Tell me about the NESPR.

Tony: It's a foundation the Warrens started back in 1952. Ed grew up in a haunted house. When he was five, he began to experience hauntings in this house in Bridgeport, CT.

His father was a state police officer. When he was five, when he returned from school, he was so afraid to go into the house that he would hide instead of going home. He'd hide under the vegetable carts that the old Italian men would have on the streets of Bridgeport. Ed would wait until he saw a light go on in the house and then finally go home.



He'd hear footsteps circling his bed and see a figure staring from his closet. His sister also was aware of the phenomenon. His grandfather walked with a cane. After his death, Ed would often hear the sound of the cane coming up the stairs of the house.

One day his father took him aside and told him, "Ed, there's a logical explanation for everything that's happening in this house."

His father knew of the activity. Ed told me his father never gave the logical explanation for what was happening; he just explained there was one.

When he was sixteen years old, he met Lorraine. When he turned seventeen, he decided to join the United States Navy. Before he left for war, he told Lorraine, "When I get back, I'm going to look into the haunting phenomenon and find if others had the same experience as me."

Ed had a voracious appetite for reading magazines on the supernatural. I have copies of some of them. But when he returned from the navy, at twenty, he went to art school in New Haven. He'd gotten married on survivor's leave. During the war, his ship went down and he was only one of sixty-nine people to survive when his vessel collided with a tanker.

One day, he came home and told Lorraine he'd quit school. He told her he was learning things he didn't need to know and could make money on his own. He urged her not to worry. That's what he did. He began painting on barn wood and called the work "barn door paintings." He had a studio called "Barn Door Studio."

He built the studio on the back part of the yard. The studio is now where the museum is housed. Back then he had students to whom he taught acrylic on wood. In addition, he

took his own work to tourist areas and sold his paintings.



They took his 1933 Chevy Master Eagle sedan, which by the way we've restored and still own. He told me that he bought the car for fifteen dollars and had to pay it off on time. He didn't have the money and paid five dollars a month until it was paid off. But he told me the guy gave him two extra wheels and a transmission.

He and Lorraine took the car up to these New England tourist areas and set the paintings out. Tourists would come by and purchase them. I asked him if he made any money and he replied he made an exorbitant amount. He told me he sold each painting for about five dollars. When I laughed, he told me they stayed at a New England motel for one dollar



per night, and he could buy a hot dog for a dime.

But you asked me how the society started. Ed would read about these hauntings. Then he'd find out where the house was, park in front of the house, take out a sketch pad, and take about thirty minutes to sketch the house. Then he'd hand the sketch to Lorraine who would go up to the house and knock on the door. When someone answered, she said that her husband had sketched the house and would they want the sketch?

A great deal of the time they'd be invited into the house using this method. Once he was in the house, he'd ask about the haunting. That's how Ed got into the houses and began to learn what other people were going through.

He kept reading about houses, but he began to consult with priests and others so that he learned more about these cases. One day, when he was in the dining room with Lorraine, he surveyed all of these manila folders and photos spread out on the floor and said, "We have to do something with all of this. Why don't we create a society which is centered on this work?"



So, in 1952, he formed the society for psychic research with Lorraine.

Bruce: I only met them briefly, one time, at a presentation. I thought they were pretty sincere about what they were doing. I'm not someone who totally believes in this, but it seemed that they believed in all they presented.

But how I interpret what you've said is that Ed was an entrepreneur, and he started the society as a business enterprise?

Tony: No, you've heard wrong. It's not a business enterprise because Ed never made money with the society. How he made money was through lectures and books. When they went on a case, they didn't charge anyone.

If someone charges you, let's say a psychic reader, how sincere can they really be? Some people, who claim to want to help you, are just out for money. Ed knew that. That's why he never charged anything to the people he helped. It didn't matter if he had no money in his own pocket.

Bruce: You were going to tell me how Ed became famous?



Tony: They were beginning to become a little known, through their college lectures, and one day the phone rings and it's a representative of West Point Military Academy in New York. They explained the general wanted to meet them regarding a number of incidents of a spirit reported seen at the school.

They sent a blacklimousine with military men in full dress uniforms to pick up the Warrens and bring them to West Point. When they walked through the halls of the academy,

Lorraine told the general she was picking up images of the ghost of a young cadet. The cadet's name was Smith, he lived in the 1850s, and he was black.

They were skeptical and told Lorraine there was no black cadet at West Point in that time frame. Following their walk through, they sat down with the Warrens and received an impromptu lecture on their work. When they were done, the Warrens were asked to keep silent about the experience at West Point. They never said a word to anyone. Later, the general called to tell Lorraine she was correct. They'd gone back through the records and found a black cadet was at the academy in that time frame.

Later, they were doing a lecture at a college in Virginia. During the Q&A session, which followed each presentation, a woman raised her hand and asked, "What can you tell us about the West Point ghost?"

Ed and Lorraine were stunned by the question because no one was supposed to know anything about it. It turned out the lady's son was a cadet at West Point, where the news of the Warren's visit was widely known.

The event hit the news wires, and for twenty-four hours straight the Warrens received no rest. People were calling to book interviews on radio stations, television, and such to discuss the West Point ghost. So that's what made them known. The West Point ghost was more responsible than Amityville for the Warren's notoriety.

Bruce: All I know about the Warrens is what I've read and personal knowledge from that long ago lecture, and from the movies. Lorraine has some kind of extra-sensory perception?

Tony: She's what's called a psychic medium. She can, for example, walk into a house and begin to sense something.



She also can see people's auras. Everyone who's alive today has an aura. A normal person can't see the aura, but it's there. It has been filmed by a Russian invention called Kirlian photography. There's been experimentation, using this photography, where a maple leaf is filmed. When developed, a person can see the entire aura around the leaf.

Then, the leaf would be cut in half and the top part would be taken away. When

photographed, the leaf would show the entire aura despite the fact that half of the actual object wasn't there. Lorraine can see these auras.

However, she doesn't walk down the street and see everyone's aura. She has to sit and concentrate to see this aura, which will tell her a lot about the person she's with. This also allows her to enter a haunted house and determine if a human spirit, or inhuman spirit, is present.

Bruce: Where did Ed meet Lorraine?

Tony: Ed worked as an usher at the Colonial Movie Theater in Bridgeport, CT. Lorraine wasn't interested in boys as much as keeping up with her schoolwork. When two of her friends asked her to go to the movies and meet this boy, she wasn't much interested.

Ed was a sharp dresser, even when he was young. When she first saw the pleated pants and well shined shoes, she thought he was a very nice looking young man. When the movie was over, Ed invited the girls to walk home and, on the way, stop for sodas.

Two of the girls ordered five cent cokes. Lorraine said that she didn't like soda and ordered an ice cream soda, which was ten cents. Years later, when he was speaking at his fiftieth wedding anniversary, he related how he met Lorraine and how her two friends ordered five cent cokes but she wanted a sundae. Lorraine went home, that night, and wrote in her diary that she had met the man she was going to marry.

Bruce: That's a great story.

Tony: Do you want to ask me about devils and demons? Do want to ask if the devil is real? Do you believe in the devil?

Bruce: What I'm more interested in asking is about the Catholic Church. Tell me about the relationship that the Warrens had with formalized religion.

Tony: The Catholic Church requires evidence. Most important is physical evidence but also individual evaluations by trained medical professionals. When there's enough documentation, the church will decide whether to become involved. It's difficult to have an exorcism performed by a priest.

I'd bet you if you called the church, right now, and said that you know of a person who's demonically possessed they wouldn't help. Ed knew a local priest who was traditional, in that he didn't accept all of the changes of Vatican II. This priest believed wholeheartedly in the devil. This priest worked with Ed on many occasions.

Bruce: What type of involvement do you have in the movies, and how do you feel about the way the Warrens are portrayed?

Tony: They're good movies but not 100% accurate. The first movie, *The Conjuring*, is 80–85% accurate. The ending wasn't. *The Conjuring II* was about 50% accurate. They created additional content, such as the Crooked Man and the Nun, but most of the rest was real.

The reason I say that the movies are good is because they portray the devil as being real. Real incidents, like these, happen to people.

It sends out a warning not to try to contact spirits because a person can invite something in that shouldn't come in.



Bruce: Was your wife, or you, involved in the movies?

Tony: Consulting? We consulted on the movies on the telephone, via email, and went out to watch filming a couple times. Lorraine consulted on *The Conjuring*, but not as much on the second movie due to her health issues.

Patrick Wilson and Vera Farmiga visited Lorraine, at her house, to get a feel for what she was like. They also visited the museum.

Bruce: Patrick Wilson, huh?

Tony: Yes, he's a nice guy.

Bruce: I noticed that the museum is closed now. What's happening?

Tony: Zoning regulations. The town sent me a cease and desist letter because a neighbor made a complaint we were running a museum in a residential area. Ed held these mini-tours for years without a problem.

Bruce: I wonder if you could do a virtual museum.

Tony: It's online, on the website. <http://www.warrens.net/Contacting.html>

Some people will purchase the online tour but most want to see it in person. They want to see the doll in person.

Bruce: I imagine they do want to see the doll.

Tony: We do have an event that we hold. I tried to come up with a way to show people the doll, without breaking any law, and came up with "A Night with Annabelle." I hold the event at a local restaurant's banquet hall and bring three objects from the museum.

I bring Annabelle as well as the Conjuring mirror. There's a presentation with a video and then I unveil each object. People can ask questions and take pictures. This is a way that I can legally show the objects and people can have the chance to see them.

Bruce: You're not worried about moving the doll around?

Tony: It's in a glass case. Remember, Bruce, every couple months I have a priest come in and bless the entire museum, including the doll. He says binding ritual prayers over the

doll. You know the invisible fences where a dog can only go so far and has to stop? That's like these binding prayers. The evil is confined to the glass case.



Bruce: Tony, I want to thank you for taking so much of your time. It's a very timely subject and one that has great interest with our readers. It would be great to meet you.

Tony: You could have a first-hand look at Annabelle.

Bruce: I don't think so. The lecture scared me for nearly a week.

Tony: Well, you might be scared but nothing would happen to you. I'll make sure you're protected against any evil.

Bruce: We'll have to see. But, once again, thank you for the great interview.

Tony: You're welcome.

BB

# STRANGE SIGHTINGS STILL HAUNT POINT PLEASANT, WEST VIRGINIA



## Mothman Museum

400 Main Street

Point Pleasant, WV 25550

Sunday through Friday 12 noon to 5 PM

Saturday 11AM to 5 PM

Adults: \$3

<http://www.mothmanmuseum.com/>

Stories of strange sightings abound in all manner of places around the world today. People claim to have seen everything from UFOs to Bigfoot. One of the strangest sightings of living phenomenon in recent history was in little Point Pleasant, West Virginia.

This quaint town may have been visited by a huge winged creature in the mid-1960s. Jeff Wamsley, proprietor of the one-and-only Mothman Museum, has compiled a significant amount of evidence from eyewitnesses and other sources. I had the chance to interview Jeff on his work and talk to him more about the winged creatures and their strange visits to his town.

Come have a look at the Mothman Museum and spend a day in picturesque Point Pleasant. Stop in the well-stocked museum shop to pick up a memento of the day.

**Bruce:** Jeff, thank you for taking the time to speak with me. Can you tell me a little about yourself?

**Jeff:** I teach graphic design at a career and technical education school.

**Bruce:** Is your background in graphic arts?

**Jeff:** My degree is in art and design. I also have a background in music. I started playing when I was fifteen, did some recording and thought I might be the next Ace Frehley.

I had a chain of record stores from about 1990 to 2003. That was going well until Napster came along and I decided to use my background in art. Art and music have been my main interests. But I've always preferred to be self-employed. Whether it was paper routes or the Mothman Museum, I enjoy working for myself.

My graphic design job is a full time undertaking, but the museum also keeps me pretty busy.

**Bruce:** You recently had a festival. Tell me what that was about.



**Jeff:** Our sixteenth festival drew about 12,000 people to Point Pleasant. We started the festival back in 2003. At the time, I had a record store on Main Street, near where the museum is now.

The movie had just come out, with Richard Gere, so we thought it would be cool to have a little Mothman festival to see if anyone would show up. About 400 people showed up for that first festival. Today it's grown into one of the biggest festivals in the state.

The festival is free and features live bands, guest speakers, authors, paranormal investigators, celebrities, and we do guided bus tours. We have a fifty-five passenger bus that ferries people to the TNT area where many of the sightings took place. There are also hay rides and fun for the family. It's turned into a great event.

**Bruce:** What exactly is a Mothman?

**Jeff:** In 1966, two young couples were riding in a car on the outskirts of Point Pleasant in the TNT area. That place got its name from the fact it was an ammunitions depot during World War II. When the war ended, the government left the buildings and structures virtually intact. It made a great place for kids to go, a lover's lane kind of idea.

These two couples saw something unexplainable come out in front of their car. At first they thought it was a man. Then they saw it had wings and red eyes. It chased them. They were afraid to go to the police so they went to a local businessman who told the sheriff's department. That was the beginning of about 100 reported sightings over a year and a half.

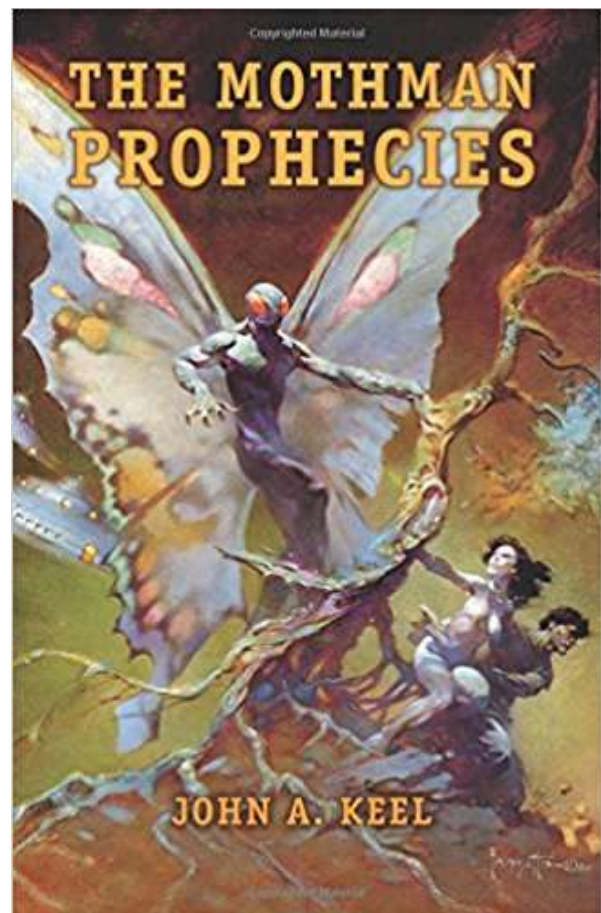
People reported seeing it fly over buildings, cars, and began theorizing on what it was. Some people thought it was a bird, similar to a large crane. Others thought it something more sinister. The name Mothman came from a Batman TV show character. When people said it had bat-like (or moth-like) wings, one of the AP reporters labeled it Mothman.

During that time in history, there were a good deal of UFO reportings around the world. Men in black showed up and talked to witnesses. They were told not

to repeat their stories. Then, in 1967, the Silver Bridge collapsed.

Some people made a correlation between that tragic event and the Mothman. The movie came out, in 2002, and portrayed that disaster as being the culmination of the Mothman event. There have also been documentaries; in fact, we recently completed one with a film crew from Japan. Many TV shows have featured us.

**Bruce:** Tell me how you first got involved with it, considering you were five at the time?





**Jeff:** I began to take an interest as I got older. I read books, including John Keel's *Mothman Prophecies*. When I owned the record stores, I first dabbled with the idea of a museum. In 2001, I decided to interview people who I knew and write a book.

One of those was Linda Scarberry, who was in the car when the Mothman first appeared. She wouldn't necessarily talk to anyone, but she spoke to me because I grew up on the same street where she lived. She'd kept everything for forty years that had to do with the sighting. She had newspaper articles, police reports, and other items.

That book was written in documentary style and sold very well. That was the catalyst for the second book in 2005. My research unearthed rare material that had been archived. Original interviews existed that hadn't been previously included. Now I'm working on a third book.

My books are word-for-word, recorded from live interviews with actual witnesses of these events. There's nothing fictional about them.

**Bruce:** When you had the chance to interview these fellow townspeople, what did they say?



**Jeff:** Most of them said they saw a six to seven foot creature with a wingspan of ten to twelve feet. Some describe the being as having red eyes the size of baseballs. It wasn't aggressive and some of them came close enough to touch it, though none did.

Others explained it was a spiritual being. Some just said they saw an enormous bird. Most people aren't thrilled at the prospect of talking about what they saw. It brought people attention they didn't want. You have to remember the 1960s. In that time, people called them crazy. Some of them won't talk of it fifty years later.

**Bruce:** Let's separate fact from fiction. The *Mothman Prophecies* embellished on the story. How much of it was true?

**Jeff:** The book or the movie?

**Bruce:** Most people have seen the movie, so let's focus on that.

**Jeff:** About fifty percent.

The first thing that deceives viewers of the movie is that it wasn't set in the 1960s. In the movie, no one actually saw a physical creature. It was more of a psychological thriller. Still, it opened doors for Point Pleasant.

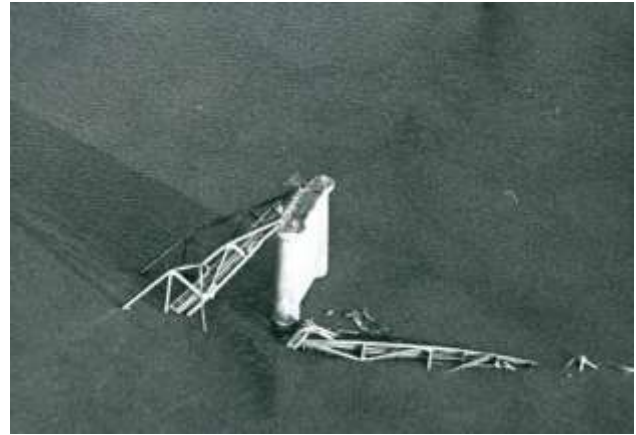
**Bruce:** Have people in other areas of the country contacted you about seeing similar phenomenon?

**Jeff:** I constantly get contacts from people all over the world. The difficulty is investigating what's been seen and therefore validating these sightings.

**Bruce:** This happened for a limited period of time. The movie suggests there was no precedent and it hasn't happened since.

**Jeff:** That's debatable. The movie suggests that, when the bridge fell, the sightings stopped. I've got documented evidence from the late sixties and early seventies which report continued sightings.

**Bruce:** Do you think they were harbingers of the bridge disaster?



**Jeff:** The *Mothman Prophecies* suggested that. It indicated a pattern of similar events, such as people sighting the creatures before the Chernobyl disaster. Most people in Point Pleasant believe the bridge fell because it was forty years old. It was built for horse and buggy and not designed for coal trucks.

However, it did prompt the government to enact a new program of bridge inspection. Lyndon Johnson signed it into effect the day after the Silver Bridge fell. It cost forty-six lives.

**Bruce:** What gave the idea for the museum?

**Jeff:** When I closed my record store, I had a good deal of fixtures left over. A man, who lived in Kittanning, PA where they filmed the movies, attended the festival every year. He collected props from the film, which he displayed during the festival. When he wasn't able to

attend one year he donated those to me.

I had boxes of archived material from articles to 8mm film. I had the retail space available, and it seemed right to put all of this on display in one location. Originally, the museum opened on Saturday and Sunday, but we've become quite popular and are now open during the week.

Some people want to use the museum for research and spend four hours with the material. Others are simply curious and spend ten minutes. There are a number of good museums in town including the River Museum. People can enjoy the park and other attractions throughout Point Pleasant, all in walking distance.

**Bruce:** Does anyone have pictures or film?

**Jeff:** No. Roger Scarberry, who was driving that night, drew the famous sketch at the police station the following day.

**Bruce:** In the movie, it seemed someone had recordings. Are there any recordings of the Mothman?

**Jeff:** No. But back then technology was pretty lame. There were no digital cameras. My dad had a Brownie 8mm movie camera.



**Bruce:** What is the most compelling thing about the museum.

**Jeff:** The rarest things are the original police reports from the first sighting. Linda told me that, when they went to the police, they put the four in separate rooms. That way, they weren't able to collude on their story. They wrote out what they saw and, when put together, they all matched. We have those original papers.

**Bruce:** Do you think it could have been a hoax?

**Jeff:** After the fact, maybe. What seventeen-year-old kid wouldn't want to dress up, go up there, and scare people? There were enough curiosity seekers up there to frighten.

But the original sightings were by many people who didn't know the others' stories. Whatever they saw, it frightened them. Roger, and the other couple, have never talked about it. They refused to be interviewed but admit they saw it.

With that in mind, I don't think they did it for the publicity.

**Bruce:** Are there any good places to stay in Point Pleasant? Maybe I'd like to spend a day and see the museums and perhaps take in the area?

**Jeff:** The Lowe Hotel is across from the museum. It's a historic hotel where a good number of paranormal groups gather.



**Bruce:** How would you characterize Point Pleasant?

**Jeff:** Mayberry. The downtown is beginning to make a comeback with new specialty stores and restaurants. Everything is in walking distance.



**Bruce:** And you're open seven days a week?

**Jeff:** Yes. The Mothman statue stands next to the museum.

**Bruce:** How did the statue come about?



**Jeff:** It was created by Bob Roach, who was a retired metal worker. He created stainless steel statues. The city hired him to create the statue. People visit that

statue 24/7. We have a Mothcam on the website that sends a live feed. You can get on there at four in the morning and there'll be people out there looking at it.

**Bruce:** What do people take away from this experience?

**Jeff:** People are fascinated. They may have heard about it but don't know the volume of evidence we have at the museum. They leave with a sense of curiosity about the Mothman.

**Bruce:** How many people actually saw the Mothman?

**Jeff:** Over 100 reported sightings in Point Pleasant. There were also sightings in Charleston, Clendenon, and Salem, WV.

**Bruce:** Anything you'd like to add?

**Jeff:** I'd like to invite everyone to our festival in September. We've set the dates for fifteenth and sixteenth of September 2018.

**Bruce:** I'd really like to thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. It's a fascinating subject and one that will continue to make people wonder.

**Jeff:** Thank you. Come on out to Point Pleasant and have a look at the museum.

*Send us your comments on this article to [dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com](mailto:dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com)*

BB

# A PEEK INSIDE NEW YORK CITY HISTORY: MERCHANT'S HOUSE MUSEUM



29 E. 4th Street New York, NY 10003

Hours: Thursday 12-8PM

Fri-Mon 12-5 PM

General Admission \$15 Students and Seniors \$10 Free Under 12

with Editor Bruce Bennett

*I'd like to thank the Merchant's House Museum for allowing us to interview Mr. Anthony Bellov, Board Member and long-time enthusiast. Mr. Bellov asked that the museum not be labeled as a "haunted house," but I think the reader will draw their own conclusions from the following interview.*

**Bruce:** Hello, Anthony, thank you for accepting an interview with our publication. If you're wondering how the museum fits in with our Western theme, let me tell you that our magazine is very diversified. We have an interest, as do our readers, on a wide range of subjects. I find the Merchant's House fascinating, and I believe our readers will enjoy learning more about this great piece of Americana.

**Anthony:** You know that the New York Times wrote that the Merchant's House is Manhattan's most haunted house?

**Bruce:** I saw the article and that was the reason I contacted you.

**Anthony:** We have hundreds of files documenting occurrences in the house that go back to 1933. The house was

built in 1832 in what was then New York's finest residential neighborhood. The Tredwell family bought it from the original builder and moved there in 1835. Seabury Tredwell, the family's patriarch, retired there in 1835 after a very successful career as a hardware merchant and importer. In those days, hardware meant anything made from metal. So he imported everything from lighting fixtures, to curtain rods, even screws and nails. When he moved up to Fourth Street, the area was on the edge of the developed city of the time. He retired to the house with his wife, five daughters, and two sons. Five years later another child, Gertrude, was born in the house. She died there, ninety-three years later, in August of 1933. She lived in the house her entire life. During that time, New York City and the entire world was transformed. What once was an affluent neighborhood was now around the corner from the Bowery and had become "Skid Row." Tenements and factories replaced patrician houses on the street. Photos, dating just after the Civil War, remind us how beautiful the neighborhood had been. They are reminiscent of stretches of London.



Gertrude who was born to an affluent family, could barely recognize what she was seeing at the end of her life. Two of the sisters married very successful husbands. One of the brothers married and the other didn't. Little by little, the remaining children whittled away at the sizable fortune Seabury left when he passed in 1865. When they could have moved up town with the rest of society, they chose to stay. Why is a mystery. Except that anyone who walks in the front door immediately falls in love with the house. All of the family's belongings are still in the house. We think that's a connection. The emotional attachment and the fact that a visitor might believe the family still lives there goes a long way to explain the unexplainable occurrences in the house.

**Bruce:** How did you first get connected with the house?

**Anthony:** My bachelor's degree is in architecture and, as a student, I knew

about the house. Back in those days, it was only open on Sundays. I walked up to the front door and knocked. When an older gentleman opened the door, I asked, "What can I do to help?" The next thing I knew there were two strong arms steering me down the hallway. That was back in 1982, and I've been a volunteer ever since. I've been on the board for nearly ten years. We've a large and dedicated volunteer force. The Tredwell family might be gone, but our Merchant's House family is ever-expanding. It's a wonderful place to be affiliated. The neighborhood loves it but developers don't. There are plans for a building to go up next door. Many groups are afraid, and I believe justifiably, that the house might collapse while construction is underway next door. So the house is embroiled in a political battle now, which in New York seems par for the course.

**Bruce:** The museum is open to the public?

**Anthony:** Five days a week. There are formal tours or self-guided tours. What the visitor will experience are rooms that, to the best of our ability, are the same as when the Tredwells lived here. Quite frankly, many people feel the Tredwells haven't left. October is a great month to visit because we interpret the museum as it would be in mourning. We

know that at least seven people died in the house. The state of mourning was a common part of people's lives. Every October we install a coffin in the front parlor, draw the curtains, cover the mirrors with crepe, and try to give the house a look of the way it would have been when the family was in mourning. Mourning was much more prolonged back then, and there were societal norms on the practice. We own some of the family's mourning clothes, which are displayed so that visitors can see how the family dressed during this time. In addition to our regular tours, on every third Friday of the month (check the website for date confirmation), we offer a very exclusive and entertaining ghost tour. During the tour we visit actual places where strange things have happened. We share photographs and recordings of disembodied voices. These are crystal clear recordings. You can hear answers to questions which the original person recording didn't hear. But a person listening to the records can clearly hear people speaking. In one instance, the voice has a very English lilt, which a visitor might immediately interpret as someone from the period the house was occupied.

**Bruce:** How did the house transition from being the Tredwell Mansion to the museum it is today?



**Anthony:** Following 1825, when the Erie Canal opened, New York became the preeminent port in North America. Men who lobbied for the Erie Canal, which ended up making New York a great city, lived in houses similar to the Merchant's House. All of those houses are gone. The only extant example is the Merchant's House. Our museum allows the visitor to step back into this antebellum era when New York was experiencing this unprecedented time of growth. The house is a federal, state, and city landmark. It can't be sold.

**Bruce:** If the building next door damages it, it would be a terrible loss.

**Anthony:** Irreplaceable. Even if the house could be rebuilt, it would be a Disneyland Merchant's House. There are still things that the house is teaching us. We'll open up a floor to do repair work and find something. We learn how the house was built, where the lumber came from, and how people lived in the house at that time. I'll give you an example: We removed canvas wall cloth from the main entrance a few years ago. We found a stove pipe opening in the party wall near the front door. Clearly there was a coal stove situated by the front door. It was more than likely used to heat the entry and welcome visitors who used that door. The family likely used the downstairs entrance, which is the

under-stoop door. This coal stove would have been used when they had parties, balls, or just entertaining. This is the only extant evidence of this common use and is totally undocumented anywhere else. This is a little window into nineteenth century life that we wouldn't have had otherwise.

**Bruce:** That's very cool.

**Anthony:** It happens all the time. When Gertrude died, in 1933, the house hadn't been converted to central heat. She was using the fireplaces to heat the house. This is another example of how authentic this house is.

**Bruce:** Have you had anyone come in to monitor the strange activity in the house.



**Anthony:** We've been working with Dan Sturges of Sturges Paranormal Dot Com for the past ten years. He's responsible for the audio recordings we have now. We also have many reports from visitors. We had a visitor, in August, come through the front door and glance into the front parlor because he heard piano music. He spotted an elderly woman seated at the piano. He took the guided tour. When they reached the front parlor he was disappointed to find the woman wasn't there. On the way out he shared the story with the volunteer who asked him for a formal write up on the occurrence. There was no elderly woman



at the piano. He described her as not playing the piano but seated and looking at it. But he saw her very clearly. We had two reports, also in August of this year, the first was by a site manager who smelled cigar smoke outside Seabury's bedroom. The windows were closed and the smell became stronger as she entered the hall. Then it was gone. Another person reported the smell of

wood smoke. She went to get the site manager, who returned, and both individuals reported the smell of wood smoke. We had a very reputable psychic named Richard Schoeller at our first investigation. Dan Sturges purposefully got off the subway at the wrong stop. Richard immediately knew he was playing. He promptly walked from the subway stop to the correct block. He pointed to the Merchant's House and said, "That's where you want me." That night he began communicating with family members and found they were most interested in the people now taking care of the house. They also wanted to know specifics regarding their belongings, which Richard couldn't have possibly known about. At one point they mentioned 'Anthony.' I was very excited to find out they knew who I was. It also explained some of my experiences because they play jokes on me. The first one that comes to mind happened around a live performance at the museum. We often present the kind of soiree common to the era. This happened to be a program of nineteenth century song. We were getting changed into street clothes after the performance, and I remarked to the others that "I have to be careful with these antique shirt studs." I had four of them and it is very difficult to find that many. I was having difficulty removing

them so the soprano, who performed that night, helped me get them off the shirt. I said, "Be careful, be careful." She said, "Yes, yes." She took the four out and put them carefully into my hand. I laid them on the desk, took my shirt off, turned around, there were three studs on the desk. I yelled, "Nobody move." There we were, down on our hands and knees, searching for the missing stud. Could not find it. Everyone was careful not to wear shoes, not to step on it and flatten it, because it was irreplaceable. We were all going out for burgers and beers so I told the group that I would come back afterwards and hunt for it and also close up the house. When we got to the director's door, two rooms away, there was my shirt stud carefully placed on the floor facing up so that I could see it. I just laughed. I said, "They did it again." Many years before, around 1990, I was helping to set up a special exhibition. I was spreading out the family china on the rear table as though they were having a tea. I was having a bit of difficulty getting it the way I'd like. The phone rang and the director called down to say I could take the call in the sun porch. She and I were the only people in the house at the time. When I went back to the dining room only minutes later the tea service had been completely rearranged. It looked really great. Somebody helped me get it right.



In that same room, the rear parlor, I heard a young girl singing one night. We had a performance that night so I thought it was one of the actresses. I knocked on the door to tell her we were closing up. When there was no answer, I opened the door and found the lights were off and the room empty. My favorite occurrence happened when I was a newbie volunteer. I was managing the museum on a Sunday, one of the first times that I was closing up myself. It was a beautiful October day when we had the windows open due to the mild fall day. I was responsible for making sure everyone was gone from the house. It was always a little creepy being in the house by myself, even these days when we're on friendly terms with the former occupants. My habit is to sing softly, or whistle, because it breaks the mood. My personal effects were on the third floor so I worked my way up from the ground floor, closing up as I went. I walked by

Mrs. Tredwell's bedroom and noticed the window was open, the lights on, and air was flowing through from the outside. I walked up to Mr. Tredwell's study and bedroom and closed those two rooms first. I shuttered the windows and installed a bar across the inside. When I returned down an interior passage back to Mrs. Tredwell's room, the door to her room was shut, which was odd. When I opened the door, I found the windows shuttered, barred, and the lights to the room off. I was frozen in my tracks, but I managed to croak out, "Thanks, Gertrude." I ran up the stairs, grabbed my things, stopped long enough to set the alarm, and was out of that house in record time. I was like an Olympic athlete. I called in sick the next day. I was absolutely terrified. Today, when something happens, it still gives me a start. I've seen a woman standing at the top of the stairs that I recognized from family photographs. After the initial shock, you realize how exciting it is to have seen something. I always say 'hello' when I come in the front door. I always say 'good evening' or 'good night' when I leave. Others have not quite acclimated themselves yet. There are some volunteers who won't stay in the house by themselves. After ten years of paranormal investigations, there remain occurrences that go unexplained.

**Bruce:** What's "haunted," anyway?

**Anthony:** If Einstein is correct, time is not linear. We sometimes wonder if the family is still there could it be because time travels in a circle? Their lives and ours may be overlapping. The building is so much the way it's always been that my feeling is we just bump into each other from time to time. One of our volunteers was up in the servant's floor. She was conducting a tour for Immigrant's Heritage Week in April about four or five years ago. She was ushering an older group of visitors down the steep staircase that connects the quarters to the lower floors. She glanced up the hall when one of the servant's bedroom doors swung open and a woman in a dark dress, with her hair



parted in the middle and a bun in the back, peered out of the door as if to say, "Are they gone?" Our docent and the woman's eyes locked. They saw each other and both of them jumped. The woman retreated back into the room

and our docent high-tailed it out of there. She told the site manager she had some trouble locking up, upstairs, and the site manager looked at her as though she were crazy. Then she fled. The most inexplicable part of this whole encounter is that the door the servant opened is where the clothing collection is kept. The room has a state-of-the-art storage facility. The door is kept locked at all times with a modern deadbolt.

**Bruce:** Is there information online about the house?



**Anthony:** Yes, people can find us at [www.merchantshouse.org](http://www.merchantshouse.org). All of the information about the house is on the website. There's a beautiful garden behind the museum too. It's one of the hidden treasures of New York City.

There's a gift shop that has antiques and little things. It's a great little shop where people often come in just to shop.

**Bruce:** Thank you for your time. I'd love to visit you some day.

**Anthony:** It's a great place to visit. I hope to see you soon!

*Photographs Courtesy of Merchant's House Museum, NY, NY 10003*

# REALITY READING: THE TRUTH BEHIND THE GUNFIGHTER MYTH

By W.M. Montague



*First, what is a "gunslinger"?*

One definition as defined by Wikipedia is and I quote:

**Gunslinger** [/ˈɡʌnzlɪŋər/](#) and **gunfighter** are literary words used historically to refer to men in the [American Old West](#) who had gained a reputation of being dangerous with

a gun and had participated in gunfights and shootouts. However, **Gunman** was a more common term used for these individuals in the 19th century. Gunfighters range from different occupations including [lawman](#), [outlaw](#), [cowboy](#), [exhibitionists](#) and duelist, but are more commonly synonymous to a [hired gun](#) who made a living with his weapons in the Old West.

That being said, let's take a look at some of the most famous of them and see if we can unravel the truth behind the myths and legends and peer into the "real lives" of these men and women of history and mystery.

Who were these people of dubious renown? Let us investigate, shall we?

I wasn't sure who to begin with since there so many on both sides of the law, it was hard to decide. I figured we would start with THE most famous of them all, which could be debated as being either Wyatt Earp, or James Butler Hickok, more famously known as "Wild Bill" Hickok. Let take a look at Wyatt Earp today.

We want to not only learn the facts about these intrepid historical and mysterious folks, but what brought them to their destined professions and inevitable ends. What made them "tick"?

What kind of man was Wyatt Earp? Some say he was a hero; others disagree, saying he was no better than the "outlaws" he fought. Really? Let's see if we can find truth on either side of that coin. Because for me, I believe

there's a bit of saint in every devil and a little devil in every saint.



Who was Wyatt Earp?

First of all, born in Monmouth, Illinois, his full name was Wyatt Berry Stapp Earp, the third son of Nicholas and Virginia Earp, born in March of 1848, on the 19<sup>th</sup> to be exact. He was one of six boys—yep, he had five, count 'em, five—brothers: Morgan, Virgil, James, Warren, and Newton. Actually, Newton was a “half-brother” from when his father was married to Abigail Storm, his first wife who died in 1839 after Newton's second birthday, but that might be another story, so on with Wyatt.

The family had moved and settled outside of Pella, Iowa in 1850 where they bought 160 acres to farm. Staying there until 1856, they

moved back to Monmouth in an attempt to find work. None being available, his father eventually became a constable for about three years before being caught bootlegging. They returned the second time to Pella just as the Civil War broke out. His older brothers, Newton, James and Virgil, joined the Union army while he and his younger brothers, Morgan and Warren, were left to tend their new eighty-acre farm since his father was busy recruiting and training soldiers.

Wanting to join his brothers in the war, he ran away numerous times, but his father (by now a provost marshal and Wyatt being only thirteen), would drag him back home.

In 1864, Wyatt's family, like so many folks back then, joined a wagon train west headed to California. Soon the boy began to come into his own. Rumored tales of Wyatt hunting buffalo when he was just fifteen have never been proven or disproven.

Later the next year in California, he and his brother, Virgil, became stagecoach drivers for a company called Banning Stage Lines. About this time it's speculated he got his first taste of whiskey, which made him sick enough to avoid it for twenty years.

A couple of years later, he would go back to Monmouth looking for his dad who had since moved again to Missouri. By 1870, Wyatt had gotten married to his first wife Urilla Sutherland. In the meantime, it seems he himself became a constable in Lamar, Missouri a month after they were wed. Unfortunately, Urilla died a few months

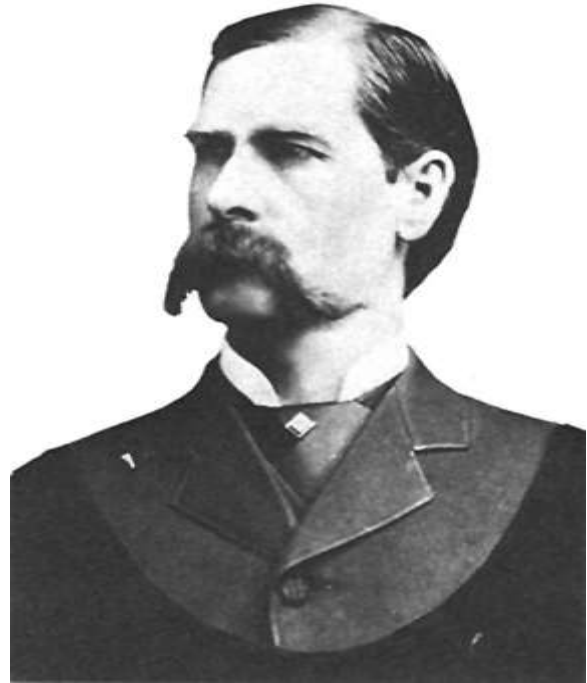
afterwards of typhus, most likely brought on by bacteria-infested fleas, chiggers or unhealthy living conditions; we don't know for sure.

Then, for almost four years, it seems that Wyatt Earp "fell off the grid" as they say, until we find him in Wichita, Kansas. When asked later about his activities during that time, he replied he wandered the Great Plains hunting buffalo and had met "Bat" Masterson; however, evidence shows that he had been in and around Peoria, Illinois during 1872 as confirmed by the city directory and arrest records for being involved in prostitution.

Wyatt then surfaces again in Wichita in 1875 after a man by the name of Mike Meagher is elected "City Marshal" (a term used at the time equivalent to "chief of police") where Wyatt joins the marshal's office. This might be the first record of Wyatt possibly working as a "hired gun" in 1874 as "Officer Earp" (unofficially, as records would indicate), prior to his official hiring in 1875. However, the fact he was a "Deputy Marshal" at the time is course for debate.

Well, here we are, Wyatt Berry Stapp Earp is now a man on his own and has his first "lawman's" job.

Join me next issue as we dig into his life as a "lawman" of some of his famous exploits, some little known tidbits, and some embarrassing moments. Also, how his reputation grew to legendary status after his death.



Until then, may the wind be at your back, the sun in your face, and you never get saddle sores.

*W. M. Montague is a leading Western author with several books currently on the market. His expertise on the subject of the Western world made him our first choice for this column. You can learn more about W.M. Montague and his books by clicking [here](#).*



# SECRETS OF THE WINCHESTER MYSTERY HOUSE



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<http://www.winchestermysteryhouse.com/>

with the Westerner© Editor Bruce Bennett

*When William Wirt Winchester died of tuberculosis in 1881, his wife, Sarah, moved west to begin a project that would continue until her death in 1922. Sarah was one of the wealthiest women in the United States, but tragedy seemed to follow her throughout her amazing life. When a medium told her that she needed to build a mansion that would house the spirits of victims of the legendary Winchester repeating rifle, she settled in San Jose and her astounding construction project began.*

*I'd like to thank Walter Magnuson, General Manager, and Tim O'Day, Director of Communications at Winchester Mystery House for sitting down for an informative interview regarding the remarkable house. About one hundred employees continue to manage the daily operations and care of this truly American gem. After all, what other home in this country was built to accommodate the spirits of the dead?*

**Bruce:** I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to discuss one of the great legends and historical treasures of our country. Our readers will especially enjoy the Western theme of your house as most probably own a Winchester rifle.

Please share background on Sarah and the house.

**Walter:** First, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you and the readers of Westerner Magazine. As you might know, the Winchester house was the primary later-life project of Sarah Winchester. She inherited a fortune from her husband, the second vice president of the Winchester Repeating Arms Co., William Wirt Winchester. Unfortunately, her happy years were few.

The couple had a child, who died soon after birth. William was ill most of his adult life and finally succumbed to tuberculosis. She pondered over why these things happened and sought out the input of a psychic medium, as was a custom at the time. He informed her that some serious karma surrounded 'The Gun That Won the West.' His advice: appease these spirits and build a mansion where construction never stops.



Sarah did just that. She left New Haven and traveled to San Jose where she found an eight-bedroom farmhouse and started work in 1884. That construction didn't stop until her death in 1922. As you can imagine, the house incorporates myriad interesting architectural features.

**Bruce:** What's planned for the house around this time of year and what's new?



**Walter:** Last year we launched a very popular Halloween Candlelight Tour. We had ten sell-out nights last year and we're doing twenty this year. During the tour, guests often experience similar occurrences to those reported by other guests and staff.

Added for this year is a trick or treat event from October 28 through October 31 aimed at kids 3-12 and featuring trick or treat stations, photo opportunities and other fun activities. There's no admission charge – it's a free event for kids who might find the Halloween Candlelight Tour too suspenseful, tense and frightful.

We've also looked to add to our guests' dining and event experiences at the house. We've brought on a world class chef who now handles our food and beverage and manages on-site catering for special events. He grows some of the offerings on the property, which guests find unique—to have something that was grown here.

We've also added some family friendly activities before and after the tour. We added, what I hate to call a shooting gallery, but is a fully themed sophisticated, themed amusement space. We call it Sarah's Attic. These are some of the key items we've focused on in the last couple years.



We have also embarked on an aggressive program of upgrading the structure. Sarah boarded up rooms that may have been damaged by earthquakes or she simply moved on to another wing of the house. The result is that much of the house is in various stages of completion. We wanted to finish some of these rooms but

accomplish the task in a manner that honors her original intent.

We've completed restoration of a beautiful dining room in the front of the house. The room was significantly damaged in the 1906 earthquake and then abandoned. We hired artisans who could use original materials meant for this room.

This house has been open for tours since 1923, and we've had over twelve million guests from all over the world. I enjoy talking to the guests and people in the community. People tell me that they enjoy the diverse options, day and night, for tours and experiencing the mansion.

Lastly, we're looking forward to the release of a major motion picture this spring with Helen Mirren playing the role of Sarah Winchester. The film was shot here and in Australia where the filmmakers recreated many authentic sets on sound stages.

**Bruce:** Do most of your guests come from outside your area, or are locals attracted to the house?

**Walter:** Locals probably drive past us every day. You and I were talking about growing up in the New York City area. I didn't go to the Statue of Liberty until

family from out of town came in and wanted to see it.

When I first came to San Jose, I tried to speak with people who are local to the house. What I found was nighttime events are a bigger draw for locals. Our daytime tours draw about 80% of visitors from out of town. Ideally, we want to create opportunities for both groups. A good deal of visits are from tourists who are exploring the Bay Area.

**Bruce:** What is the neighborhood surrounding you like?



**Walter:** Until a few decades past, this area was full of fruit orchards and farms. People who've lived here for a while remember it as a quiet farm community. Then, in the 1970s, the Silicon Valley emerged. So, the dichotomy is the amount of tech in the area mixed with cultural institutions, like the Mystery House, which is a part of the farming tradition in the area.

**Bruce:** What strange things have been reported in the house?



**Walter:** Our exciting and extremely chilling Halloween Candlelight Tour is based on many reported sightings and experiences from both guests to the house and employees. It's not so much that people see something; they often feel as though they're being watched. They may also feel a tap on the shoulder, hear a sound, or even smell something.

Some guests and employees have seen a physical apparition. We've named him Clyde. We believe we've identified him as one of Sarah's workmen from an old picture. He's been seen stoking the coal fireplace and in the basement attending the furnaces.

*Ghost Adventures*, the number show on the Travel Channel, did two episodes here over the past three years. During the most recent show, they captured what they called a ghost hand. They

have a picture on one of the stairways of what looks like a hand rising.

James Van Praagh, the renowned author and medium, did the first séance in the mansion in decades. We asked him to share what he picked up. He said that Sarah is very happy that people are still enjoying the home decades later.

We don't market the paranormal activity, but it's something that happens. We're a beautiful Victorian mansion with a terrific firearms museum. But people do hear the stories, and it's natural for them to become intrigued.

**Bruce:** My understanding was that Mrs. Winchester built the house to accommodate the spirits of those killed by the Winchester rifle. If that's the case, it must be one of the most haunted places around?



**Walter:** We're always on the list of most haunted places. Some of the odd architectural features were purposefully built to confound malevolent spirits while the nicer amenities accommodated friendlier spirits.

**Bruce:** What would you add to what we've discussed?

**Walter:** Recently people have reached out with questions about use of the house. We've heard from corporate managers who want to plan a team building event and, of course, we hear from couples planning a wedding about the use of the site.

We are a bookable venue. If you want to have a once-in-a-lifetime dining experience in one of Sarah's private dining rooms, we can accommodate you. If you're interested in a séance, we can do that. We're also good for cocktail parties and other events. If it's your dream to plan a memorable event, then we'd be happy to have you.

**Tim:** Just to back up what Walter said, a 160-room Victorian mansion in the Silicon Valley – you can't get more unique than that. If you're looking for a singularly unique place to hold a corporate retreat, or simply a quiet dinner in a magical setting, engagement party, wedding, we can accommodate you. Nothing is more extraordinary as a venue.

**Bruce:** Do you promise your visitors will see ghosts?

**Tim:** We can't schedule ghosts; they have their own timeframe. When Walter first started, we were on the phone when I thought he had dropped some books. I asked him what just happened and he told me the window just slammed shut on its own without a breeze or wind.

Though we can't schedule ghosts, we never know when they'll show up. We were taping a TV segment on a recent Sunday and a member of the crew sent

me a succession of pictures that shows an object ascending a staircase.



I have a photo I took two years ago for Facebook. When I got back to the office, I saw what I thought was the reflection of clouds in the window. When I showed it to my wife we realized there was a face in the window.



The house is over a century old while the tour itself is closing in on 100 years old (in 2023). We are taking such good care of the estate that I can't imagine spirits being unhappy.

**Bruce:** You've got to watch Walter. He got his start at Disney and might be sneaking in some of that 'Haunted Mansion' influence.



**Tim:** No one said it hasn't been sneaked in already (says with a wink). When Sarah Winchester moved out here it was the end of the time called the 'Old West.' Imagine, here's this proper heiress from the east crossing the country on steam trains. Imagine all that she saw. Though she was transplanted, like all of us, she was a woman of the west.

One last thing I'd like to point out. If people are interested in learning more

about Sarah, and her house, we've relaunched a new website. On the website is a blog we call 'The Annunciator.' We post historical pictures on the blog and offer a good deal of history. You can also find information on the latest events and the upcoming movie.

**Bruce:** I'd like to thank you both for your time. I've been fascinated with the Winchester Mystery House for years and can't wait for my next visit to San Francisco so that I can schedule a visit.

**Tim:** We appreciate your interest in Winchester Mystery House.

To comment on this article, please send your email to

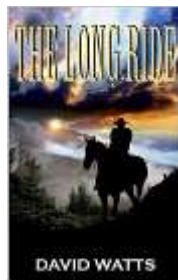
[dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com](mailto:dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com)

# THE WESTERNER © TOP TEN FOR OCTOBER

The editors thank our readers for the great response to last month's top ten list. Some of the great books are climbing the list and other new entries are reader favorites.

Enjoy the top ten for October:

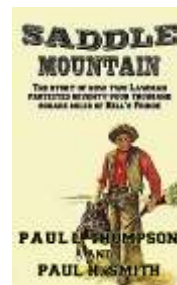
Here are the Western top ten as voted by you, our readers:



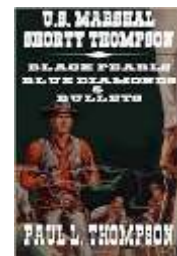
1. Author David Watt's mega-hit, **The Long Ride**, continues to sit at the top of our best-seller list. Readers have overwhelmingly endorsed the latest by this accomplished author, and we think that sales will continue to soar!



2. Robert Hanlon's, **The Guns of Clint Cain** continues to hold the second position. Sales have been heavy for this widely read author, and this book continues the upward trend with readers.



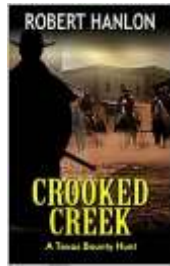
3. Paul Thompson... what else needs to be said? Once more proving his popularity with Western readers. **Saddle Mountain** is one of his best, and tightly ensconced in our third position.



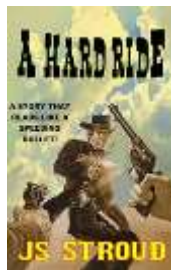
4 At number four this month is another entry by Paul L. Thompson. **Black Pearls, Blue Diamonds, and Bullets** has been moving up quickly and promises to hit the tops of Western charts in the upcoming months. Another Shorty Thompson book, this one has been highly regarded by



readers and is one of the renowned author's best yet.



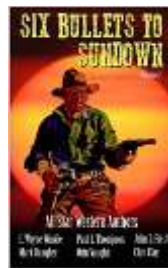
5. Robert Hanlon has established himself as an author whose books are in high demand. **Crooked Creek** is another example of this writer's great slant on the traditional Western. Highly regarded, and well-reviewed, **Crooked Creek** moves up two positions in our chart this month.



6. Author J.S. Stroud brings us the fast moving, page-turner **A Hard Ride**. Readers remark that the style and skill of this author make **A Hard Ride** a must-read for Western lovers.



7. On our list, for the first time, is **The Guns of Pecos County** by David Watts. His first Western was a best-seller and has regained popularity with the overwhelming success of his second novel. Don't miss this great Western favorite!



8. It's easy to see why **Volume 2 of Six Bullets to Sundown** compilation makes the cut. With great stories by Paul L. Thompson, John D. Fie, and Clint Clay, this is a must-read for Western genre enthusiasts. The format is short stories and the buzz from readers is great!



9. **Abilene Junction** moves up one position in our top ten. Sales of this highly criticized new entry by author John Wesley have been brisk. The book is based on the Gabriel Torrent series by Bruce G. Bennett. Readers will find **Abilene Junction** to run tangent from most successful Westerns.



10. **Ride the High Country** by Clint Clay takes the final position in our top ten this month. The fast moving and bone jarring bronco ride will leave the reader wanting

more of this popular Western writer. Grab a copy and sit down to one of the best Western novels this year!

Send your favorites and comments to [dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com](mailto:dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com). We want to hear from our readers.

# LEGENDARY SLEEPY HOLLOW



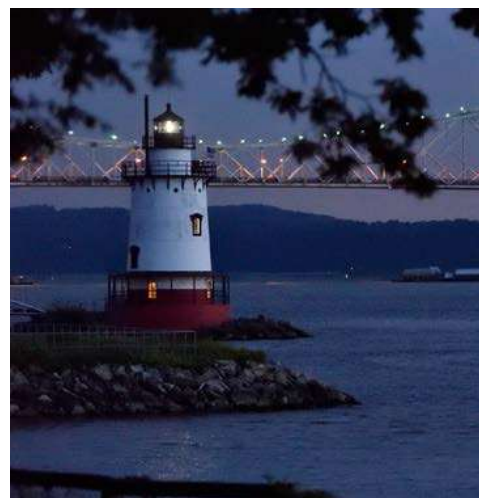
## BY BRUCE BENNETT

Snuggled in the embracing arms of bucolic hills surrounding the Hudson River lies charismatic Sleepy Hollow. This 2 ½ square mile village, bordering on the river, was made famous by the legendary American writer Washington Irving.

Ironically, in Irving's day there was no village of Sleepy Hollow. I had the

chance to speak with Anthony Giaccio, Village Administrator, who filled me in on the area's recent past. In 1996, a General Motors Facility, which had been a large regional employer, moved out. Around the same time, villagers of what was then North Tarrytown voted to change their name to Sleepy Hollow.

This change helped to distinguish their village from nearby Tarrytown and also helped to establish a desire to embrace their rich history. Since then the village has become a desirable location for commuters to New York City as well as the traditional home of long-time residents. This eclectic mixture works well for Sleepy Hollow and gives it an energy that is nearly palpable.



It's not only a great place to live, it's a splendid place to visit. Tourists who are looking for a relaxing place to spend time will find solace in the bosom of

Washington Irving's sleepy little town. There are a number of hotel choices in Tarrytown along Route 119. Mr. Giaccio informed me of a river development project that will include a new hotel.

Sleepy Hollow is a great destination for families and history buffs year round. During the fall season, visitors can enjoy many events that celebrate this time of year. The foliage change along the river promises to be spectacular, and fun happenings are planned in many of the local venues. For more information, visit <http://visitsleepyhollow.com/>.

A splendid place to start is the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. I had the pleasure of speaking with Christina Orban-LaSalle, Director of Services and Sales, who filled me in on some of the interesting aspects of the 168-year-old gem. This is the resting place of Washington Irving, Andrew Carnegie, Samuel Gompers, and William Rockefeller, among other dignitaries.

Visitors are encouraged to contact the cemetery in advance to schedule in one of any number of diverse tours offered. Daytime and candlelight tours are available. Guests are invited to take a tour or wander the rolling expanse on their own. Wonderful architecture, rich history, and beautiful pastoral scenery will thrill young and old. Please visit

<http://sleepyhollowcemetery.org/events/tours-and-events/> for more on tours and events.

Rob Schweitzer, who represents Historic Hudson Valley, filled me in on a number of the great attractions in the area. Visitors will find a nicely landscaped setting by a small lake, which fronts the visitor's center for their venues.



Philipsburg Manor, situated across the lake and accessible by a walking bridge, predates Washington Irving by more than twenty-five years. The original plantation encompassed 52,000 acres of ground. The historic site features an accurate representation of subsistence farming along the river in the mid-1700s.

Mr. Schweitzer explained that its rich history holds more than simply a depiction of rural life in the mid-eighteenth century. He stated that the entire development was worked by African-American slaves. This was especially interesting because not many people, even history buffs, realize the

significance of slavery in the north during this period.

Philipsburg Manor is open seven days per week. Tickets can be purchased online, or at the visitor's center. Adults are \$12, Seniors \$10, and Children 3-17 are \$6. Children under three years old are free. Group prices are available.

Ten miles down Route 9 South, on the Tarrytown-Irvington border, a visitor will find Sunnyside, which was Washington Irving's home for twenty years before his death. Sunnyside is not only worth seeing for historical value, the architecture of the house is remarkable. Mr. Schweitzer called it a "mélange of tastes Irving acquired during his time in Europe."

Once again, the property has been maintained to be as true to the era as possible and continues to be preserved by Rob's organization, a non-profit focused on the preservation and promotion of these great properties. Visitors to Sunnyside can get a real feel for Irving in the time he was writing his great classics.



Sunnyside is a must for visitors to the Hudson Valley, if only for the beautiful river view and landscape alone. Buy your tickets online to avoid the \$2 surcharge at the site. Adults are \$12, Seniors \$10, and Children 3-17 are \$6. Children under three years old are free. Group prices are available.

Don't miss the chance to visit the preeminent Hudson Valley landmark, Kykuit. Rockefeller's hilltop paradise is about a three-mile climb from the visitor's center in Sleepy Hollow. Visitors will marvel at the architecture and landscape of this one of a kind estate.



Kykuit sits atop a hill overlooking the valley and river below. John D. Rockefeller essentially created the

modern day science of philanthropy, a systematic, organized way of giving dollars and other resources that lead to great leaps forward in addressing issues like poverty and access to preventative medical care. It is easy to see how a person's mind might wander in such a setting of enormous beauty. The estate is the most modern of the attractions, but gives the feeling of truly taking the visitor back to a time of abundant opulence.

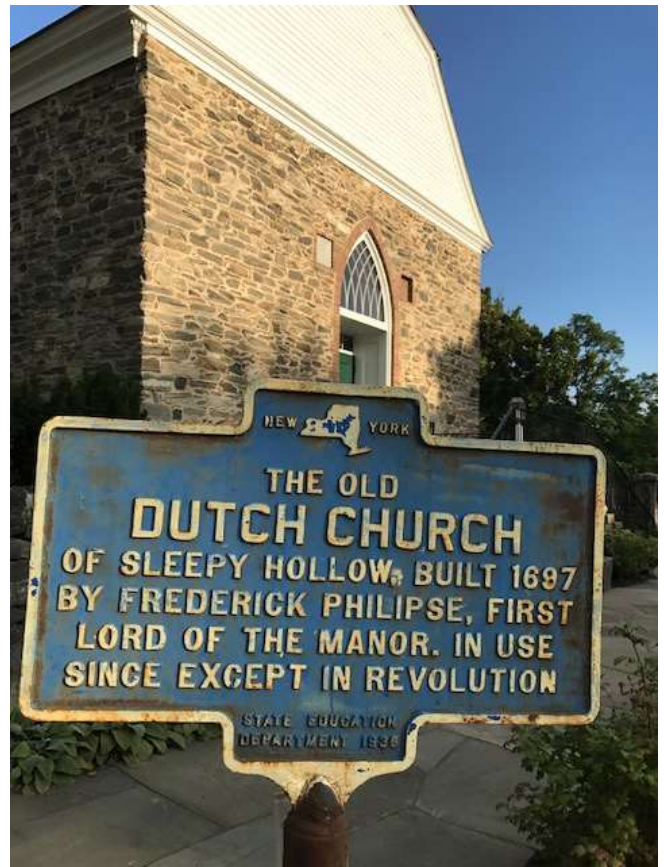
Because of the demand for tickets for this venue, Rob suggests that visitors check online for availability. The last thing his organization would want was for someone to come and not be able to see this architectural wonder. Special fall events are scheduled at the estate; please check online for times and prices.

<http://www.hudsonvalley.org/>

Rob reminded me to make sure I mentioned the Union Church, a few miles up the road. Visitors will be surprised to find stained glass windows by the renowned artists Henri Matisse and Marc Chagall. The five minute trip is worth the time to view the last piece of artwork by Matisse before his death, the rose window.



Halloween is a great time to visit Sleepy Hollow and the historic Hudson Valley. There are many events planned that will highlight the antiquity and notorious history of this picturesque and welcoming area. Tourism is a major industry and visitors can expect a friendly, red-carpet treatment.



A Dutch Reformed congregation continues to hold services at the church on the knoll above the bridge that spans the small creek at village center. Though most services are held at their facility in Tarrytown, especially in winter season as the original church is in preserved condition and can be chilly on cold days, the congregation still worships in this historic building.

The church also owns the graveyard that surrounds the building on three sides. Visitors will find an authentic experience in the oldest church in continuous use in New York State. A sense of the past permeates this gem and visitors are encouraged to experience the structure and grounds first hand.

Many of the names on grave stones and monuments may not be familiar to the casual tourist, but fans of American literature and history buffs will immediately recognize the monikers of contemporaries of the famous writer borrowed for the legendary tale. You can find the graves of Eleanor Van Tassel Brush, Abraham Martling, and Samuel Youngs in the Old Dutch Burying Ground.

These names may not be familiar, but they are the real life individuals who became the models for characters in Irving's famous tale. Not only are the

models for his characters interred here, but the very legend still lurks below the seemingly innocuous facade of this picturesque village.



Down the hill from the church and surrounding Sleepy Hollow Cemetery is the new concrete and steel bridge that carries visitors over the stream. The original bridge, as documented in the story by Washington Irving, has long passed. Still, a quiet observer standing at the edge of the new structure and surveying the church grounds above might still be allowed that tiny finger of chill that runs down the back when the night is quiet and gentle floating fish-boned clouds obscure the waning moon.

If all this history makes you hungry, Mr. Giaccio informs me that many options for great eating exist in town. Famished visitors will find diverse repose from

mouth-watering pizza to cuisine for sophisticated palettes in the town's many restaurants.

For those hard-core visitors who can't wait for dark and a possible headless horseman spotting, many events are planned during this season to take advantage of mild nights along the Hudson. You can even try a scary ghostly walking tour, if you have the fortitude. These events will be posted on the village's website at <http://visitsleepyhollow.com/>.

You're invited to visit Sleepy Hollow this fall and year round for a wonderful chance to absorb the history and charm of this wonderful and unique place. Don't forget to check out the website ahead of time to maximize your stay. You'll take home an experience that will be remembered for a lifetime.

*To comment on this article, please email us at [dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com](mailto:dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com)*



# DEVELOPING YOUR ART TALENT BY JUDY MASTRANGELO

This is my third article about INSPIRATION as part of the Creation Process.

Since this month's Westerner has a Halloween theme, I'll mention some of my artwork that ties in with this wonderful season, which is one of my favorite times of year.

As I've mentioned, over the years, I've been developing a method of creating that I call "Mind Painting." This is where I visualize an image and develop it in my mind over a period of time. I don't sketch it down with drawings. It's all in my head. I can see it with my eyes open or closed - in a daydream or at night before sleeping.

In a nutshell, this is how I start my "Mind Painting":

I find some time to myself so that I may meditate in my own little world. Sometimes I close my eyes and see what comes to my mind. Often it starts with beautiful abstract patterns. I just sit back and watch how this will develop, like watching a fascinating movie. Then the wonderful images will start to develop in

my mind. I've found that the trick is to try and control these images and mold them the way you want. I've developed this to the point where an image will just pop into my head for a painting. It will show the completed painting, in color, down to the last detail. And this complete image is something I must try to keep with me as a model to strive to create, through all the stages of development for this particular painting.

I've done many kinds of artwork in my life - from Abstract to Portraits, Landscapes, Florals, etc. But I've come to the conclusion that the realm of Fantasy is where I most feel at home. When I'm painting my Elves and Fairies, I tell myself - "I could paint these Magical Folk forever! They make me feel happy." So my advice is to look into your heart and see what you enjoy painting the very most.

This is because I've discovered that: What you love to paint is often what you paint best.

I also love to paint animals, magical creatures, flowers, glowing colorful landscapes, etc. I usually add these themes in one way or another to my paintings. The end result is a place I like to visit in my imagination. I enjoy inviting viewers into my world to share this magic with me.

I have sometimes been called an illustrator, even though, as I said, I've studied classical painting methods of the Old Masters. Now, even the great classical Old Masters did illustration - such as Michelangelo, when he painted his magnificent Bible stories on the Sistine Chapel. But I don't mind whether I'm classified as a fine artist or an illustrator. What is important to me is the fact that some people appreciate my work. If it gives them joy and something memorable to reflect on, I'm very satisfied. I'm sure you feel the same when others enjoy your artwork.

In the following paintings, I'll mention what inspired me to create them.



1. In this first pictured painting, entitled "AUTUMN BALLET," you can see how magical this time of year seems to me. I feel that all of nature is alive and often personifies nature. I see beings in trees, feel a great closeness to animals, and enjoy all art forms. I feel that fairies often seem like ethereal ballet dancers, as I've portrayed here. And I love fantastic creatures, such as unicorns, which I've even decorated here complete with Halloween mask.



2. This painting, "GINGERBREAD WITCH," is an illustration from Hansel and Gretel by the Brothers Grimm. I'm a big opera buff, and one of my favorite operas is

“Hansel and Gretel” composed by 19th century composer Engelbert Humperdinck in 1893. There is a delightful 1954 animated film made of this opera with stop motion animated figures. It inspired me to create some artwork based on this opera.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hansel\\_and\\_Gretel:\\_An\\_Opera\\_Fantasy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hansel_and_Gretel:_An_Opera_Fantasy)



3. My painting “CINDERELLA AND FAIRY GODMOTHER” is another of my fairytale paintings that I enjoy creating. Great fantasy literature will always be an inspiration to many people, no matter what their age. It brings out the magic in life.



4. My painting “JACK AND THE GIANT” is another illustration of a famous English fairytale ~ Jack and the Beanstalk. I’m always inspired by fantastic beings in literature, in film, etc. Giants, trolls, etc. are amazing to me. I’m really not one for horror literature and movies, per se. But I do love great fantasy art forms.



5. And dragons are another of those amazing fantasy creatures that are fascinating to me. This painting "SAINT GEORGE AND THE DRAGON" portrays that great story. I enjoy portraying these magical beasts in my paintings.

I speak about my painting techniques in my book "PAINTING FAIRIES AND OTHER FANTASIES." I think you will find it interesting.

In it there are also some downloadable tutorials that are very helpful.

<https://judymastrangelo.com/books-2/painting-fairies-other-fantasies/>

Please check out the first two of my series "ART PRINTS AND OTHER PRODUCTS by Judy Mastrangelo." They are about products with "ELVES AND FAIRIES":

<https://judymastrangelo.com/2017/09/11>

[/art-prints-and-other-products-by-judy-mastrangelo-1-elves-and-fairies/](https://judymastrangelo.com/2017/09/29/art-prints-and-other-products-by-judy-mastrangelo-1-elves-and-fairies/)

and "FANTASY" artwork products:  
<https://judymastrangelo.com/2017/09/29/art-prints-and-other-products-by-judy-mastrangelo-2-fantasy/>

My books are going to be published by DSP very soon, under the new imprint title of "IMAGINATION BOOKS." They will include many exciting titles in several formats, including AUDIO BOOKS, EBOOKS, HARDCOVER FANTASY, and fun filled ACTIVITY books for the entire family. I'm also now developing a wonderful series of creative COLORING BOOKS for both Adults and Children. They will have themes such as: FANTASY, ELVES and FAIRIES, ANGELS, FAIRY TALES, LANDSCAPES and FLOWERS, and WHIMSICAL ANIMALS. You can get an idea of my current books in print on my website book page:

<https://judymastrangelo.com/portfolio/books/>

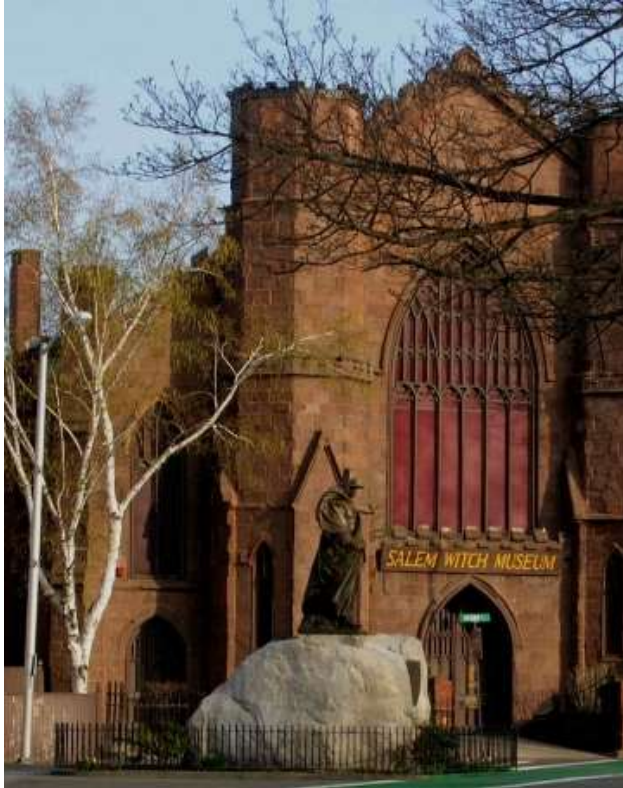
To find out more about my artwork please visit my website at:

[www.judymastrangelo.com](http://www.judymastrangelo.com)

While you're there, please sign up for my newsletter to discover what's happening in my magical world:

<http://judymastrangelo.com/newsletter/>

## INTERPRETING THE PAST FOR A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRESENT AT THE SALEM WITCH MUSEUM



19 ½ Washington Square North

Salem, Massachusetts 01970

Phone: 978.744.1692

Hours of Operation:

Open Year Round 10-5 daily

There's no better place to go trick-or-treating than quaint little Salem, MA. Salem is a lovely little village nestled on the New

England coastline a stone's throw from Boston. History abounds in Salem, which once was a bustling seaport where Nathaniel Hawthorne apprenticed in the custom's house.

However, Salem has a darker past. The Salem Witch Trials renewed their fame with the release of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* in 1953. Since then, the happenings around the trials have been portrayed many times in film and story.

The Salem Witch Museum is prominently positioned in the town square and boasts a stunning American gothic façade, which alone is worth the trip. I caught up with Stacy Tilney, who is Director of Communications for the museum, who was kind enough to tell me about the mission of their enterprise.

**Bruce:** Hello, Stacy, thank you for taking the time to talk with us.

**Stacy:** It certainly is my pleasure.

**Bruce:** What is the museum all about?

**Stacy:** Our main presentation is an overview of the Salem Witch Trials. Our mission is to be the voice of those victims as well as those being persecuted in the time between, all the way up to the present. We feel our purpose is not only to interpret the witch trials for visitors, but also define the concept of "witch" and how that has been interpreted by people over time.

We relate the events of the witch trials to formulas for witch hunts in modern times, and we've assembled information on modern

witch hunts. Some examples are the Japanese American internment during World War II, The House Committee on Anti-American Activities questioning people on whether they are communists, and how the modern AIDS epidemic scapegoated the entire gay community.

The goal is to invite visitors to contemplate modern witch hunts and their effect on society. We examine how certain groups are scape-goated based on stereotype.

**Bruce:** What is the format of the presentation? What can a visitor expect to encounter when they come to your museum?

**Stacy:** The first presentation takes place in a large darkened auditorium. We use life-sized stage sets, which are vignettes to tell the story of the witch trial. For example: A Puritan household, what the jail might have looked like, and other representations of the period.

A narrator tells the story of the witch hunt in a way that the average American middle schooler might understand. Our presentation is academically correct, but not meant to be academic.

Following this presentation, the visitor travels through a second exhibit that examines the concept of "witch." We consider the mythological definition of the word, we talk about the Puritan meaning, and we discuss modern witches who have absolutely nothing to do with the events of 1692.

None of those people targeted were actually witches. Ironically, we have a large population of practicing witches in Salem

today. A visitor can expect to spend about 45 minutes to an hour learning about the witch trials and other topics.



**Bruce:** Who is your target audience?

**Stacy:** Our target audience is the middle school group. This group is learning about the Salem Witch Trials and studying the House Committee on Anti-American Activities actions of the 1950s. School groups regularly attend, and we also have a good deal of families who visit the museum.

These families come from all over the world. This is the reason we have the presentation available in nine different languages and also why we focus on a manageable level of staging. Our staff is extremely knowledgeable and our bookstore is well stocked. If someone wants to delve deeper into the witch trials, they will easily find the resources at our location.

**Bruce:** So your presentation is not meant to be scary, like a haunted house, for instance?

**Stacy:** No. We're not set up to be a haunted house. We're not intentionally trying to scare

people. There are haunted houses in Salem that do a good job of that.

Good or bad, our story is horrifying as it is. We don't have to embellish or dramatize too much. However, we do find ourselves in a city that celebrates all of the connotations of the word "witch." Even though we're not celebrating the witch trials, you will find people – especially in October – who are celebrating Halloween. That has nothing to do with the trials.

You can have a lot of fun in Salem, but it's important to understand the witch trials and their place in American history.

**Bruce:** Is part of your mission to raise people's awareness to how groups can be singled-out and prevent another event like the Salem Witch Trials?

**Stacy:** We each do our own tour, based on what we think is most important. When I give a tour, I try to get people in the mindset of the Puritan. They were worried about their families and allowed their anxiety to overcome them. That doesn't mean there weren't people who were guilty.

When we look at post-9/11, we oversimplify our viewpoint so that we identify anyone who practices a certain religion as a "terrorist." I like to characterize it as "tribes." It's easy for people to think, "If you're not part of my tribe, you must be evil."

As humans, we're very apt to fall in this trap. One of our objectives is to bring this fact to light.

**Bruce:** It plays well to middle and high school students, who can identify "cliques" inside their own society.

**Stacy:** It's easy to see how a group of people try to alleviate their own anxiety by blaming someone.

**Bruce:** What year did the museum open?

**Stacy:** 1971.

**Bruce:** Does it come into play that the Massachusetts Bay Colony was somewhat of a closed society?

**Stacy:** That's accurate to say.

**Bruce:** In that type of society, they would be more aware of outliers?

**Stacy:** There's a matter of population. In Puritan New England, the population was much smaller. A person knew their neighbors better than we do today. Those who were involved in the trials definitely knew everyone involved.

None of the accusations were leveled against strangers. One person would level an accusation against someone with whom they had a grudge. It's a little darker because they knew each other. If you had a reputation for being argumentative, you were more likely to be accused.

**Bruce:** When I visited, I was struck by the terrific Gothic church building where the museum is housed.

**Stacy:** Absolutely.

**Bruce:** What's the history of the building?

**Stacy:** It was built in 1846. The architect was Menard Lefevre. He was a well-known New York architect. His specialty was the neo-Gothic look. He designed several churches to include the flying buttresses and Gothic windows and affectations that make ours such a great building.

**Bruce:** It's a beautiful building that sits right on the square.

**Stacy:** One of my favorite things about the museum is the building.

**Bruce:** What else would someone want to put on their agenda when visiting Salem in October?



**Stacy:** If my best friend were coming, I would tell them two things: First, October is a very unique experience. I think that the witch trial takes a back seat to the mythological connotation of "witch." The pointed hat, etc. We also have a great maritime history that's worth checking out. Second, I'd tell my friend to check out [hauntedhappenings.org](http://hauntedhappenings.org), which is the portal for everything Salem in October.

That's the place you can find out where to attend the witch's ball, go to a pumpkin patch, or myriad related activities. If you like to come in costume, this is the place to be at this time of year.

**Bruce:** Thank you for your time.

**Stacy:** Thank you so much!

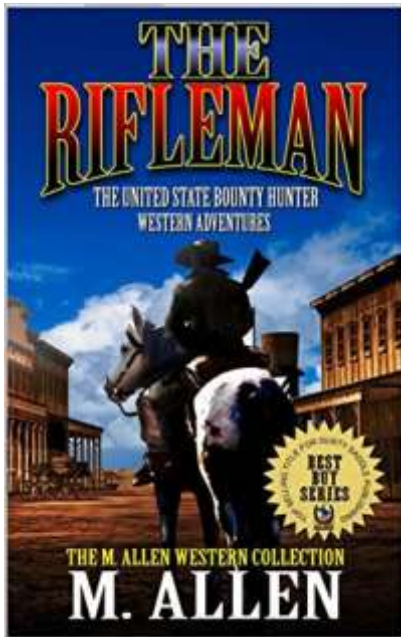
*Visit the Salem Witch Museum year round for a great presentation on a greatly misunderstood real event in American history. Don't plan your New England vacation without putting Salem on the top of your agenda!*

*BB*



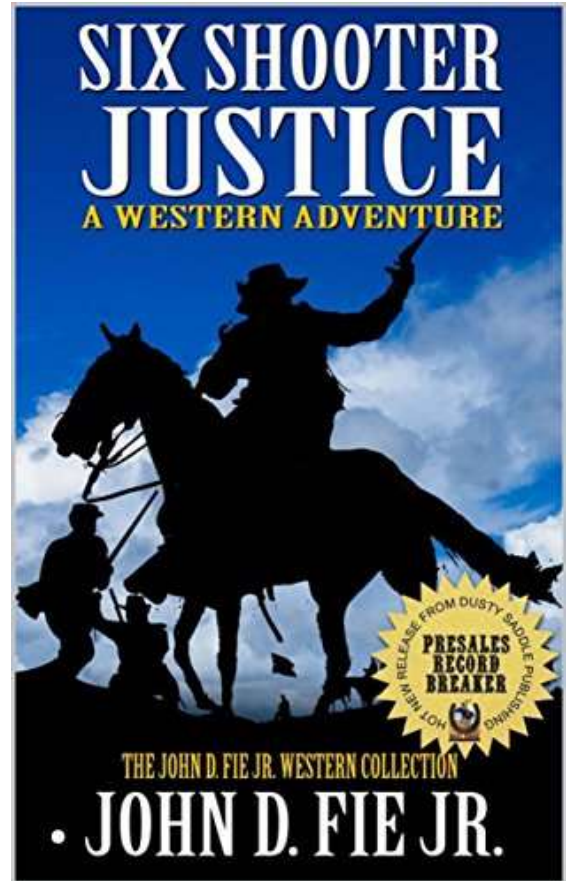
# REVIEW CORNER

WITH LON HAMILTON



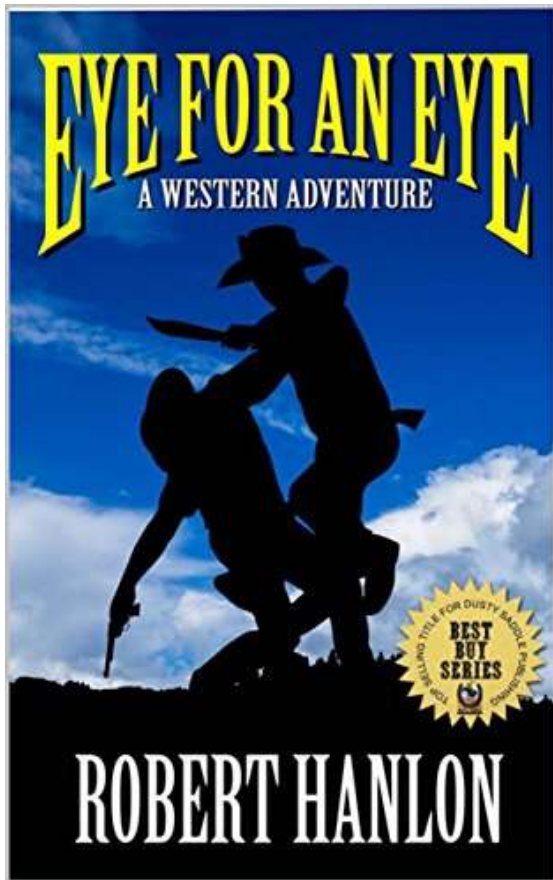
“The Rifleman” – M. Allen

Pull together the complete M. Allen catalog just before a new book hits the market. What a great idea! These are good adventure stories with a hint of romance. Readers will be pleased by the stories, the writing and the editing. If you are looking for something warm and enjoyable to delve into, pick up this set from Amazon. Westerner magazine rates “[The Rifleman](#)” as a four-star read.



“Six Shooter Justice” – John D. Fie, Jr.

This new release from the ever-popular Mister Fie draws four of his bestselling novels together into one handy package. For readers who like breakneck action, adventure and dead criminals—this collection would make a fine choice. With a new Fie novel on the way, this collection would also make an ideal refresher course for those who read his books in the past and would like to revisit them before delving into a new Fie adventure. Westerner magazine rates “[Six Shooter Justice](#)” as a five-star read and a five-star value purchase.



### “Eye For An Eye: A Western” – Robert Hanlon

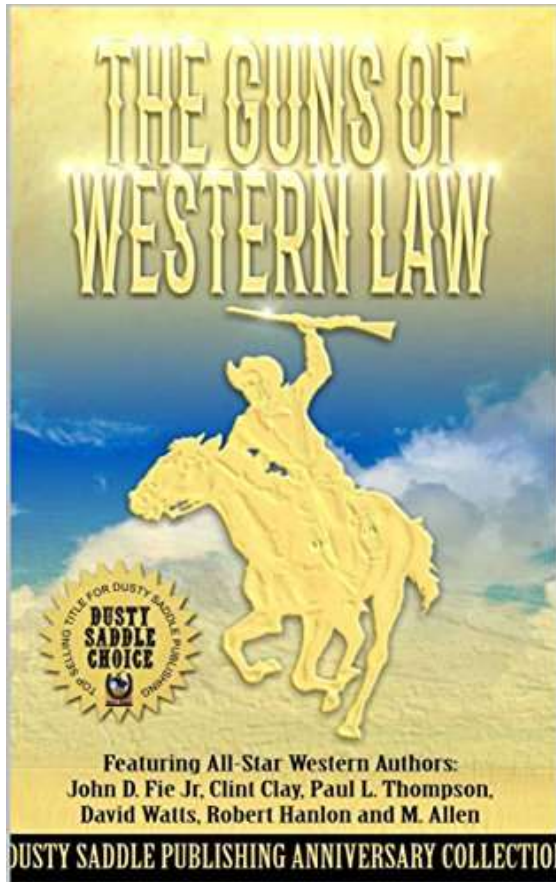
The boy is in rare form with this one. Another Hanlon gem for your collection. You’d think he’d start getting a bit stilted with five books a month—but he doesn’t. The ideas are flowing, and this tale of revenge with a biblical twist is certainly worth checking out. You’ll find that Hanlon keeps getting better with age. It’s a foregone conclusion that he’ll be back with another book before long—there’s sixteen in the pipeline. Westerner rates [“An Eye For An Eye”](#) as a four-star read.



### “The Captain’s Coat” - Randall Dale

A major release from one of the finest Western writers of this generation. Dale brings the Civil War right into your hand with his new release. In 1851, President Jefferson Davis authorizes a daring plan for the Confederacy to win the war by taking control of the West. What became known as the Army of New Mexico, a rag-tag group of Texas volunteers, held the balance of the war on their shoulders as they marched to control Northern New Mexico then Denver and on to California and Oregon. That’s the description of the book—directly from Amazon. All I can say is read, read, read, read, read. This is one

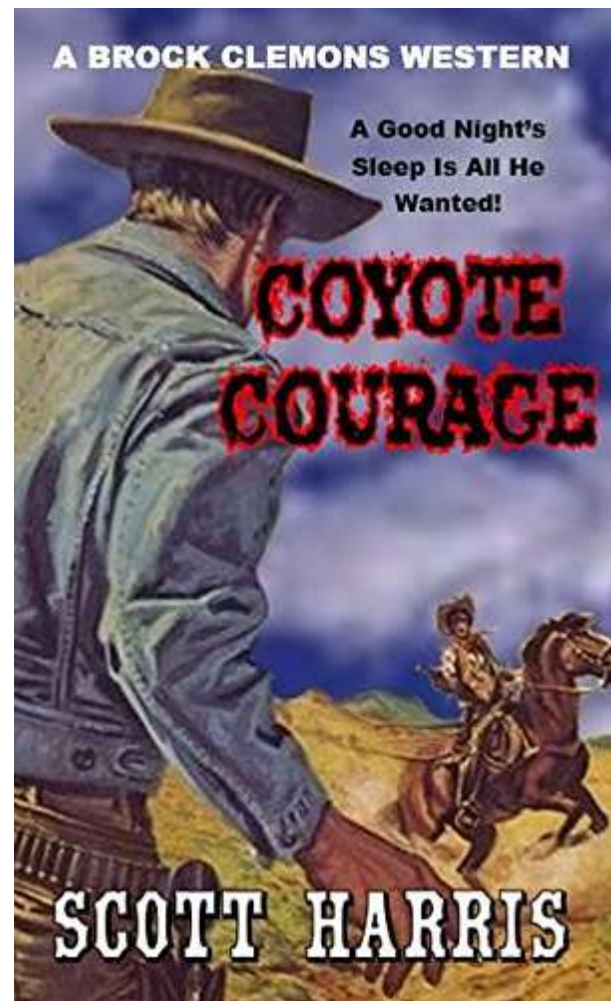
of the finest examples of Western writing at its best. It's a great Western. Seriously. Westerner rates "[The Captain's Coat](#)" as a five-star read and Westerner's pick of the week.



**"The Guns of Western Law:" The Dusty Saddle Publishing Anniversary Collection:- Various**

It's already the first anniversary for Dusty Saddle Publishing. The company hasn't thrown a party—it's just put out a collection of its bestselling novels at a very, very low price. What could a Western fan want more than that? This collection has entries from M. Allen, John D. Fie, Jr., Robert Hanlon, David Watts, Paul L. Thompson and others. With the great success the company has had

during 2017, it must have been hard to cull their catalog down to just a handful of releases. Snap up this one if you want to spend your days riding the Old West on the horse of your choice, with the mission of your own making. Let's have a party—Dusty Saddle Publishing Westerner rates "[The Guns of Western Law](#)" a four-star read.



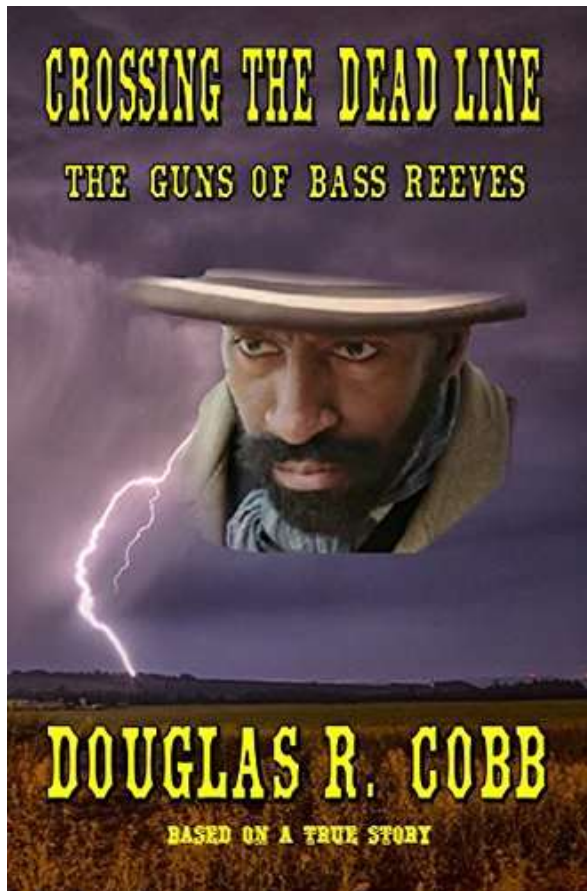
**"Coyote Courage"—Scott Harris**

The new signing over at Rusty Spur Publishing is from a new face—Scott Harris. This is a great attempt at recreating the great Westerns of the 1950s. Everything about the book screams retro-throwback. What's

fascinating is that Scott Harris might be one of the interesting writers to hit the market this year. He has a way of making scenes incredible visual for the reader. I would check this one out. Westerner rates "[Coyote Courage](#)" as a four-star read.

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To request a book review, or to have your book featured in an upcoming issue of Westerner, please email our friendly team of booklovers directly at [dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com](mailto:dustysaddlepublishing@gmail.com)



### "Crossing the Dead Line"- Douglas Cobb

Another Bass Reeves story. Cobb is in Fred Staff territory and he's not a bad storyteller. This new book about Reeves may please readers who are willing to give him a chance. Read if you have read all the Fred Staff "Bass Reeves" novels. Westerner rates "[Crossing the Dead Line](#)" as a three-star read.

# THE MOVIE MAN!

WITH MARK BAUGHER



I told you last month that I would talk about the money needed to make a movie. What if I told you it costs \$250,000 to make a movie, would you believe that? Truth is I have no idea. I was talking with an English filmmaker about how we made this movie. He said the story of making the movie is as good as the movie itself. Let's see what you think.

In my movie making experience, I had everything line up and fall in my lap. Patrick Ball, the cinematography and directing genius, called me wanting to further his career. He and his crew used the C-Bar movie as proof that they know what they are doing.

Since making C-Bar, they have all gone forward with their careers, from opening their own companies to working in Hollywood. Like I said last month, the secret to success is surrounding yourself with the right people.

The locations are everywhere if you live in Arizona. Most of the actors are Western re-enactors. They gather up on weekends and do skits for the tourism trade. They had the needed costumes. I just called the groups and put the word out, and they came. The leading lady I needed had to be young, beautiful and a good horsewoman. I was walking through a feed store and saw Robin talking with someone she knew. I looked her over. Here stood a young, blond, beautiful woman with a big belt buckle. I knew that from this chance meeting she was the perfect woman to fill the role. I just walked up to her and asked if she wanted to be in a movie. Luckily, my wife was with me. I gave her my novel. She called three days later, telling me that she has been the Jessie Lynn character all her life. She would do the part.

Most of the props came from thrift stores. But what about that big problem of insurance? We were an all-amateur group making a movie. My personal liability coverage covered us. Shooting in the national forest was not an issue. I checked with them and they said as long as we were not a commercial organization, there was no problem.

With all we had available to us, the next big hurdle was showing the people involved that

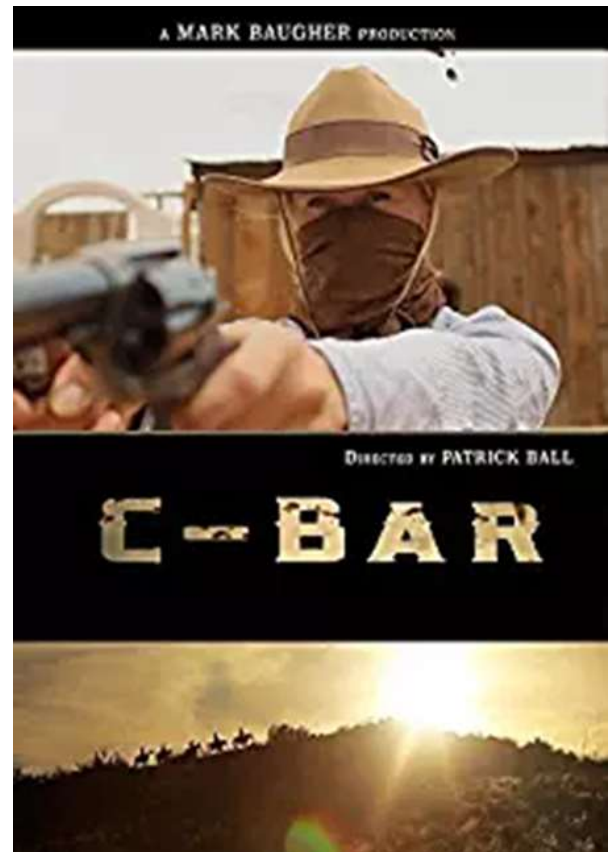
they were part of a viable production. There were people doubting what they were getting into. Their doubts vanished after the first shoot. We had a good script. Patrick and his crew were professionals. I made sure everyone enjoyed the experience.

From that day on, it got more and more fun to be a part of. Over eight months, we shot thirty-eight days. I worked seven days a week for that eight months, pulling everything together. Was it work? I guess so. Was it fun? It was the most fun time of my life. I think that writing novels is fun, but it pales in comparison to the excitement of movie making. I would do it again just for the fun. Wouldn't even care if I got paid.

We are working on another episode. It's written. The actors are in place and the locations are lined up. C-Bar is ranked at 35 at this time on Amazon. Are you ready for your homework? Go to Amazon movies. If you are a Prime member, just click on the movie and at the end, leave us a review. Reviews are very important for growth. If you are not a Prime member, you can sign up for a thirty-day free trial.

Next month, I will tell you about our premiere and the amazing things that followed. The kind of amazing that I still can't believe happened.

P.S. The movie cost nothing to make.



# COSTA RICA

## THE ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME!

BY DENNIS HAMBRIGHT



Costa Rica! The name alone conjures up images of adrenaline-filled tropical adventure. Lush jungles teeming with colorful toucans, chattering monkeys skittering through the treetops, and all manner of exotic animals just waiting to be discovered. Roaring whitewater rivers rushing down through deep valleys. Iconic volcanoes dominating the horizon. Seemingly endless miles of emerald green rainforests. I mean, really, who hasn't dreamed of experiencing the adventure of a lifetime right in the big middle of it all?

If tropical adventure is on your bucket list, then Costa Rica is absolutely the place for you!

You might be wondering why I've zeroed-in on Costa Rica as the perfect spot for catching that adventure of a lifetime. After all, there are lots of great travel destinations where adventure can be had, right? Well, there are, but I've spent a lot of years traveling all over the world, and I can tell you from personal experience, Costa Rica is the perfect location for safe, logistic-friendly, adventure travel.

If you've read my #1 Best Selling travel guide, *Day by Day in San José, Costa Rica*, then you already know that I'm not a fan of muddling through a lot of dates and statistics. Like I always say, there are a hundred other places you can get all that information, and that's just not my bailiwick. But there are a few important details we should consider that will help us get things kicked off on the right track as to why Costa Rica is such a perfect destination for your adventure travel.

Since the 1990s, Costa Rica has been widely regarded as the 'Poster Child of Ecotourism' throughout the highly competitive travel industry. Without a doubt, Costa Rica has it all—mountains, jungles, rivers, beaches, and every other adventure-laden venue that you might be looking for.



Costa Rica has dedicated more than 23% of the country's entire land mass to national parks and recreational areas. That's the largest percentage of any country in the world that's been officially committed to being protected in that way. I guess you can say that it's pretty clear that Costa Rica is devoted to preserving the natural resources needed to maintain an ongoing diverse ecotourism wonderland.

More than 2,000,000 tourists a year come to Costa Rica. That's a lot of visitors for such a small country, so there must be something pretty special that not only keeps tourists coming, but keeps them coming back time and time again.

Approximately 50% of all visitors who come to Costa Rica engage in some type of ecotourism activity. With its rich biodiversity and immense ecosystem, Costa Rica is the world leader in eco-adventure travel.

Bottom line: Costa Rica is ground zero for adventure travel. Bingo! That's us, baby! Seekers of heart-thumping, adrenaline-pumping experiences that you'll remember for the rest of your life!

Now don't get me wrong. I know I refer a lot to adrenaline-pumping adventures, and that might lead some of you to think that the only kinds of activities to be had are ones that are dangerous, or just for thrill-seeking Tarzan wannabes. That's absolutely not the case. There's something for everybody in Costa Rica.

Adventure is all a matter of perspective, and whether you're 18 or 80, you can find something that's just perfect for you. For some travelers, that might mean shooting down a Class IV rapid on one of the top whitewater rivers in the world. For others, it might mean leaning over the bow of a sleek catamaran as it skims out over the waves towards one of the islands. For others still, it might mean a hike up a mountainside to gaze off into the crater lake of a majestic volcano, or snapping photos of a waterfall cascading over a two hundred foot cliff.

What I'm getting at is, no matter what your level of interest or physical ability might be, there's an adventure to be had in Costa Rica that's just right for you.

### **Top Five Types of Adventure Tours**

There is an almost endless list of different types of adventures that you can experience in Costa Rica, but in order to narrow that down just a little, here is a list of my favorite five to help get you started toward finding that life-changing experience you've always dreamed of:

1) **Whitewater Rafting:** Costa Rica has a wide variety of exciting rivers for fans of whitewater rafting, but I'm going to tell you from personal experience, hands down, Rio Pacuare is absolutely the place you want to go. Even though Rio Pacuare is one of the top whitewater rafting rivers in the world, you don't have to be a skilled rafter to enjoy it. Even for inexperienced first-timers, it's a thrill you can embrace, and one I promise you'll never forget. And besides shooting down through the thundering rapids, you'll also travel through some of the most awe-



inspiring tropical scenery that you can possibly imagine. When people ask me for adventure recommendations to enjoy in Costa Rica, the Rio Pacuare whitewater experience is always my #1 choice.

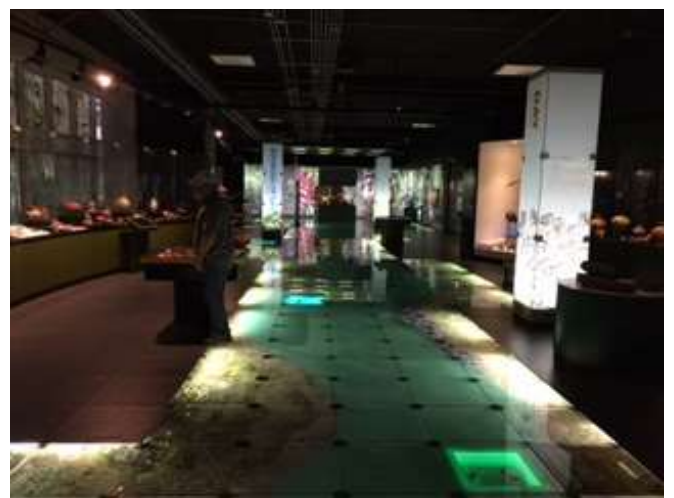
2) **The Beaches:** Costa Rica is blessed to have beaches on both the Pacific and the Caribbean coasts. Starting out from the capital city of San José, you can get to the Pacific in about 2 hours, and to the Caribbean in about 4 1/2 hours. Once you hit the coast of your choice, you can enjoy an almost endless selection of national parks and tourist destinations where you can partake in a wide variety of activities, including fishing, surfing, snorkeling, SCUBA diving, and of course, just good old ‘beach bumming’ around. If surf, sand, and sun are things that you enjoy, then Costa Rica will definitely have something for you.



3) **Volcanoes:** Costa Rica is not a very large country. In fact, the state of Texas is 13.5 times larger in landmass than the whole

country of Costa Rica (just to give you a little perspective). But for such a relatively small country, Costa Rica has approximately 200 volcanic formations, and 5 of those volcanoes are classified as active. So if visiting a monumental volcano is on your list of things to do, then you’ve chosen the right place.

Two of the most popular volcano destinations are Poas and Arenal. There are some great tours to the Poas Volcano that include extra little benefits such as butterfly farms, waterfalls, and coffee plantations, so you can enjoy a full day of adventurous sightseeing that takes in much more than just the volcano. If you travel up to the Arenal Volcano area, you’ll find that it is also the home to some of the most amazing geothermal springs that you’ll find anywhere in the world. My personal favorite is the Baldi Hot Springs resort, where there are lots of pools filled with water heated by the volcano, waterslides, swim-up bars, and even a wonderful buffet supper that is laid out on an expansive deck where you can enjoy your meal in the imposing shadow of the Arenal Volcano.



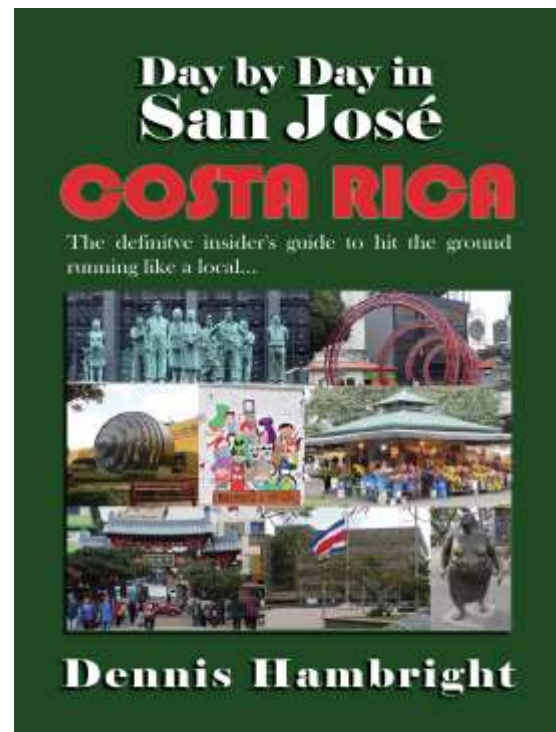
4) **Isla Tortuga:** If you'd like to take a trip out to the islands for a day, then I highly recommend heading out to Isla Tortuga. From the dock at the Pacific Coast city of Puntarenas, just a couple of hours out of San José, you can catch a ride on a catamaran that will spirit you away on a several hour ride out to the island. Once there, you can enjoy snorkeling, jet skis, banana boat rides, kayaking, beach volleyball, and a wide host of other sun-and-fun activities, as well as a delicious buffet luncheon spread out under the palm trees. Traveling out to Isla Tortuga for a day will give you the opportunity to enjoy all the wonder and excitement of a true beach adventure.

5) **Zip-Lining & Canopy Tours:** As I've mentioned before, Costa Rica is covered with lush jungles and rain forests, and one of the best ways to turn all that amazing scenery and eco-wonder into a personal adventure is by zip-lining through the treetops, or taking a more leisurely ride through the canopy in a steel cage. Either way, you'll experience the wonder of the emerald jungles in a very up-close and personal way.

Here's a little *Insider's Tip* that you might really surprise you. Besides all the well known adventures that can be had in Costa Rica, the capital city of San José is also a marvelous travel destination that's just full of history, music, culture, and an almost endless variety of great things to explore. In fact, San José is such an engaging and interesting city, when it really came into its own back in the late 1800s, the European community dubbed it the *Jewel in the Jungle*. Even more amazing, every one of the adventures I've

outlined in my Top Five list above can be enjoyed as day adventures out of San José, so not only can you enjoy the wide selection of heart-thumping, life-changing travel adventures in Costa Rica, you can take many of them as one-day adventures right out of San José, and still have time to enjoy the city itself. So besides the sun-and-fun of the beach, or exploring the emerald jungles, or gazing into a volcanic crater, or any of the other amazing adventures Costa Rica has to offer, I hope you'll also take the time to see just what its wonderful capital city has to offer.

*Dennis Hambright has written the definitive insider's guide to hit the ground running like a local in San José, Costa Rica. With his Amazon #1 Best Selling, '[Day by Day in San José](#),' Hambright proves that he isn't*



*just another wannabe who declared himself a local expert.*

*He lives there, works there, speaks the language, and understands the culture and the people. He digs into all the nooks and crannies when it comes to getting around town like a local, and on how to get the best bang for your buck. Hambright peels back the puffy veneer that most travel writers hide behind and exposes the city like none other, covering everything from where to eat, play, workout, shop, and even where to wash your undies. Whether you're there for a day, a week, a month, or fall in love with the place and decide to stay, this is definitely the guide you don't want to be without.*



# TERRIBLE TIMES IN THE U-S-O-F-A

by Fred Staff

The beginning of October brought a terrible time to Las Vegas and the entire nation. None of us can even imagine what could have brought about such an inhuman event.

As a historian, I couldn't help but notice that the news channels continued to classify this ghastly event as the worst shooting in modern times. The words 'modern times' put it in a different category than all times.

This brings me to the story of the Wounded Knee Massacre.

The event took place on December 29, 1890. The location was near Wounded Knee Creek on the Lakota Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. This date is the climax of a long-standing injustice to the Sioux Indians had endured. Their land had been taken away. Their buffalo, their main source of

food, had been nearly totally removed from the earth. They had placed their lives in the hands of Indian Agents who were supposed to supply them with rations. In fact, the rations had been cut so severely that they were facing starvation. The weather had been so bad that their own crops had failed, along with their neighbors'. Treaty after treaty had been broken.

These suffering people had done what so many do in this kind of situation—they had turned to religion. A medicine man named Wovoka.

During a solar eclipse on January 1, 1889, Wovoka, a shaman of the Northern Paiute tribe, had a vision. Claiming that God had appeared to him in the guise of a Native American and had revealed to him a bountiful land of love and peace, Wovoka founded a spiritual movement called the Ghost Dance. He prophesied the reuniting of the remaining Indian tribes of the West and Southwest and the banishment of all evil from the world. The most appealing promise of his vision was that the white man would be forever removed from the land and the buffalo would return. The Ghost Dance began to be practiced in many tribes, and the settlers and U.S. Army assumed that it was the beginning of a great uprising. Indian Agents nervously wrote for assistance. Interestingly enough, these were the same people who, in general, had not fulfilled the promise of food and assistance to the tribes and, in most cases, were making huge profits by keeping funds that were allotted for that purpose. Their main demand was that the

Indians under their protection should be disarmed.

On December 15<sup>th</sup>, Sitting Bull was shot and killed by U.S. troops while they were trying to arrest him. They had feared that the leader of the victory over Custer's 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry was planning on leaving the reservation. He had been a strong advocate of the Ghost Dance. This event, of course, had heightened the fears of those living on the reservation.

On December 28<sup>th</sup>, the band of Chief Spotted Elk (he was also called Big Foot) was intercepted by a segment of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry led by Major Samuel Whiteside. They escorted the party to Wounded Knee Creek, some five miles away. The next morning the remains of the 7<sup>th</sup>, led by Colonel James Forsyth, joined him and totally surrounded the Indians' camp. They had four Hotchkiss Mountain Guns; this weapon was the first breech-loading cannon used by the U.S. Army and was a rapid reload light cannon.

They were going to disarm the group. It should be noted here that General Leonard Wright Colby had stated that the Ghost Dance was not to be feared and that disarming the Indians would be a grave mistake. This sentiment was backed up by General Miles. Colby also pointed out that no one had been attacked or hurt by the Indians and that they should be left alone.

General Miles sent this telegram from Rapid City to General John Schofield in Washington, D.C., on December 19, 1890. It points out the failures of the U.S. and again supports a hands-off policy:

*"The difficult Indian problem cannot be solved permanently at this end of the line. It requires the fulfillment of Congress of the treaty obligations that the Indians were entreated and coerced into signing. They signed away a valuable portion of their reservation, and it is now occupied by white people, for which they have received nothing.*

*"They understood that ample provision would be made for their support; instead, their supplies have been reduced, and much of the time they have been living on half and two-thirds rations. Their crops, as well as the crops of the white people, for two years have been almost total failures.*

*"The dissatisfaction is wide spread, especially among the Sioux, while the Cheyennes have been on the verge of starvation, and were forced to commit depredations to sustain life. These facts are beyond question, and the evidence is positive and sustained by thousands of witnesses."*

These two people, along with several others, knew that the Indians had many reasons to be wary of any action taken. It made simple logic. You are starving them to death and then you want to take their guns, the one tool they had to provide food.

On this fateful day, the troopers went among the tribe members and started taking their guns. One of the theories is that a deaf Indian by the name of Black Coyote refused to give up his rifle. He said he paid a lot of money for it and wouldn't part with it. A struggle ensued and some of the few young

members drew their rifles and fired on the troopers.

This unleashed a hell storm of grapeshot from the breech-loading cannons. This rained massive death to both Indians and, in some cases, the troopers who were amongst them.

The troopers lost all control of the situation, and there was firing from all different directions. Some Indians tried to run to a canyon for protection, and they were ridden down and slaughtered. The massacre continued until there were an estimated 300 men, women and children lying on the cold plains of South Dakota.

The troopers did not escape unscathed; a total of twenty-five troopers were killed in the exchange, most of them from what is now called friendly fire. There were twenty Medals of Honor awarded by the Department of the Army to those who took part in the slaughter.

To my knowledge, this is the largest number of victims of to be killed by gunfire in the history of the U.S.



## GARY VASEY'S WORLD OF THE SUPERNATURAL

Sorcerers and sorcery. Sounds like Harry Potter right? Well, actually, sorcery is on the rise.

Last week, the British newspapers and breakfast TV shows were filled with lurid news about sorcery being used to fix health issues. Yes, cure cancer and so on. Of course, they labelled it all satanic and called it left hand path and so on...

I know a bunch of sorcerers. I have actually worked sorcery myself. In my world of occult, magic and mystery, there is nothing strange nor sinister about sorcery. Like anything, it can be used for good and for bad, and that very much depends on who the practitioner is. One

sorcerer friend of mine gets very upset when his clients ask for various sorts of hexes and curses against people. For him, this pettiness is a waste of his talents and expertise, not to mention, it impacts his karma to do these things. He charges a hefty fee for his services, and let me tell you – he has no lack of clients. Sorcery is the 'in' thing these days.

Many years ago, I came across a book called 'The Miracle of New Avatar Power' by one Geoffrey Cobb. Back then, this little book was only available on the black market or passed around friends, and it cost a great deal of money to get a hold of. Once obtained, the reader finds chapter after chapter of corny stories of how practitioners gained power, fame, wealth and more, using the system. It was a total chore bore to read. So, what was the fuss? Well, towards the end of the book, Cobb lays out several simple but highly effective spells for money, influence, love, legal battles and yes, cursing. It is said that you must read through the corny Hollywood stuff up front in order for the spells to actually work. At the time I first got this book, I was in two minds about sorcery, so I didn't use it.

Roll the clock forward several years and I was talking on Facebook in certain groups to many people using Cobb's

system. The book now is, of course, available on Amazon at reasonable prices, as the ebook and Amazon revolution has brought many previously difficult to obtain books into the broader public domain. I learned from one trusted occultist friend that the system was basically a modern Grimoire and highly effective. Another told me that sorcery could be used with wisdom.

Then one day, my world collapsed. I had a 'love' problem. I reluctantly opened Cobb's little book and found the ritual for bringing back the love in a partner, and I did the thing for three solid days. She came back all right and pretty much immediately. I was joyful. However, I learned a valuable lesson, too. We split up again two years later and much of that two years was tough, toxic and unenjoyable. I discovered that sorcery works, but there are CONSEQUENCES. You can't really change fate – but maybe you can delay it. However, for each day of delay, you add to the misery you experience when it is all over. Wisdom is needed... My friend was right. Since then, I have used the system with remarkable results. I am quick to gift the spirits called to help with candle burning.

So, let us back up for a moment. Spirits, he says?

Yes. Spirits.

In this alternate world of magic, there are spirits of various types everywhere. They can be thought of like the nuts and bolts holding everything together, for they all have roles and responsibilities. Some spirits are good, others neutral and some are malevolent. Conjuring spirits has been used for centuries in order to question and learn from them occult secrets, and more recently, to cure cancer.

When researching for my book – God's Pretenders – I came across this remarkable story of raising a spirit. Eliphus Levi – a famous magician was convinced to raise the spirit of a dead philosopher by a young woman, who asked him to conjure the spirit of Apollonius of Tyana. He agreed and then spent significant time in fastidious preparation that included fasting, meditating, maintaining a vegetarian diet and having imaginary conversations with the great alchemist. On the 24<sup>th</sup> July, the event took place, and the master himself ably recounts it as follows:

*"All was ready by the 24th of July; our purpose was to evoke the phantom of the Divine Apollonius and interrogate him as to two secrets, of which one concerned myself and the other interested this lady.*



*She had at first intended to assist at the evocation, with an intimate friend; but at the last moment her courage failed, and, as three persons or one are strictly required for magical rites, I was left alone. The cabinet prepared for the evocation was arranged in the small tower, four concave mirrors were properly disposed, and there was a sort of altar, whose white marble top was surrounded by a chain of magnetized iron. Upon the white marble was chiseled and gilded the sign of the Pentagram; and the same sign was traced in different colours upon a fresh white lambskin, which was spread under the altar. In the centre of the marble slab there was a little brazier of copper, containing charcoal of elm and laurel wood; another brazier was placed before me, on a tripod. I was clothed in a white robe, something like those used by our Catholic priests, but longer and more full, and I wore upon my head a crown of verbena leaves interwoven in a golden chain. In one hand I held a naked sword and in another the Ritual. I lighted the two fires with the substance requisite and prepared, and I began at first in a low voice; then louder by degrees, the invocations of the Ritual. The smoke spread, the flame flickered and made to dance all the objects it lighted, then went out. The smoke rose white and slow from the marble altar. It seemed to me as if I had detected a slight shock of earthquake, my ears rang and my heart*

*beat rapidly. I added some twigs and perfumes to the brazier, and when the flame rose I saw distinctly, before the altar, a human figure, larger than life-size, which decomposed and melted away. I recommenced the evocations, and placed myself in a circle which I had traced in advance of the ceremony between the altar and the tripod; I saw then the disk of the mirror facing me, and behind the altar became illuminated by degrees, and a whitish form there developed itself, enlarging and seeming to approach little by little. I called three times upon Apollonius, at the same time closing my eyes; and, when I re-opened them, a man was before me, completely enveloped in a shroud, which seemed to me rather gray than white; his face was thin, sad and beardless, which did not seem to convey to me the idea, which I had previously formed of Apollonius. I experienced a sensation of extraordinary cold, and when I opened my mouth to question the phantom, it was impossible for me to articulate a sound. I then put my hand upon the sign of the Pentagram, and I directed towards him the point of the sword, commanding him mentally by that sign not to frighten me but to obey. Then the form became confused and suddenly disappeared. I commanded it to re-appear; upon which I felt pass near me, like a breath, and something having touched the hand which touched the*

*sword, I felt my arm instantly stiffened as far as the shoulder. I thought I understood that this sword offended the spirit, and I planted it by the point in the circle near me. The human figure then reappeared, but I felt such a weakness in my limbs, and such a sudden exhaustion seize hold of me, that I took a couple of steps to seat myself. As soon as I was in my chair, I fell into a profound slumber, accompanied by dreams, of which, upon returning to myself, I had only a vague and confused remembrance. For several days my arm was stiff and painful. The apparition had not spoken to me, but it seemed that the questions which I wished to ask it answered themselves in my mind. To that of the lady an interior voice replied in me, "Dead!" (it concerned a man of whom she wished to have some intelligence). As to myself I wished to know if reconciliation and pardon would be possible between two persons, of whom I thought, and the same interior echo answered pitilessly, "Dead!"*

*I relate these facts exactly as they happened, not forcing them upon the faith of anyone. The effect of this first experiment upon me was something inexplicable. I was no longer the same man..."<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> An extract from a chapter translated by the Editor from  
From *Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie* from The Theosophist,

Levi claims to have repeated the experiment twice more and to have obtained two great cabalistic secrets via this interrogation of the spirit of Apollonius. It is thought that Levi transmitted these secrets only to a few dedicated students and disciples.

However, mostly, the spirits used in sorcery are not human. They are the spirits or the intelligences of the elements or of the astrological signs or some other such system – even the Cabbala. I have limited my experiences of sorcery to the simplistic rituals of Cobb but I know many who have gone much further.

The lurid stories in the British press over the past week or so have centered on Savannah who claims to have made a pact with Lucifer. At her website, you can get acquainted with black magic and read blog articles from her followers. It's a lucrative old business though sorcery these days. Want your lover back? \$500 will do it. Want the ultimate hex for that special someone you grew to despise? \$1500 will do it. You can pretty much order any spell and even make your own pact with the devil....

December, 1882 as reprinted in "Theosophical Siftings" Volume 4  
– see <http://hpb.narod.ru/EvocationApolloniusEL.html>

For me, however, there is an issue with Savannah and her website, and that is that she makes Satan and Lucifer one and the same entity. This is incorrect. They are very different entities so far as I am concerned. Lucifer got a bad rap by being mistaken for Satan throughout history. Lucifer is the light bringer – the angel who brought humanity knowledge and wisdom.... Not the overlord of hell. As for her claims to have healed people of ailments such as cancer? Well, there is no medical evidence for Savannah's wild claims, but the publicity has been mighty powerful magic as her website attracting more than five million visitors this year!

One of my sorcerer buddies offers a set of similar services from his website and Facebook page. I believe he has power, and I believe that he gets results. Partly, I think it works because the person for whom he conducts the magic believes that it will. Magic requires belief to work, for it needs you to bring your imaginings into real existence in this world. I wrote a book a couple of years ago called *How to Create Your Own Reality* that will go a long way to explaining how this works.

Another headline about sorcery in recent weeks has been in the USA where a

bunch of witches and pagans have set themselves the task of binding President Trump. Meanwhile, his former competition, Mrs. Clinton, has readily admitted to being involved in sorcery too. According to this extract from Breitbart<sup>2</sup> (if you believe a word they say):

*It was a dumb mistake. But an even dumber "scandal." It was like quicksand: the more you struggle, the deeper you sink. At times, I thought I must be going crazy. Other times, I was sure it was the world that had gone nuts. Sometimes I snapped at my staff. I was tempted to make voodoo dolls of certain members of the press and Congress and stick them full of pins. Mostly, I was furious at myself.*

*This isn't the first time Clinton wrote about voodoo, which Google's dictionary [defines](#) as a "religious cult practiced in the Caribbean and the southern US, combining elements of Roman Catholic ritual with traditional African magical and religious rites, and characterized by sorcery and spirit possession."*

*In her previous memoir, *Hard Choices*, Clinton described attending a voodoo spirit ceremony with a "voodoo priest" during her honeymoon with Bill Clinton in Haiti in 1975.*

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2017/09/12/hillary-clinton-i-wanted-to->

[make-voodoo-dolls-of-reporters-lawmakers-and-stick-them-with-pins/](http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2017/09/12/hillary-clinton-i-wanted-to-make-voodoo-dolls-of-reporters-lawmakers-and-stick-them-with-pins/)

*She related in Hard Choices:*

*One of the most memorable experiences of our trip was meeting a local voodoo priest named Max Beauvoir.*

*He invited us to attend one of his ceremonies. We saw Haitians "seized with spirits" walk on hot coals, bite the heads off live chickens, and chew glass, spit out the shards, and not bleed. At the end of the ceremony, the people claimed the dark spirits had departed.*

Meanwhile, I stick with Cobb. His stuff works. I am more aware of the consequences of what I am doing, and I use it only rarely but I guess I too am a sorcerer.

Now, where is that spell for fame and fortune?

*Don't forget to check out all the great Halloween paranormal stories on my website. Click here for more [free](#) terrors!*

# THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW

*Found among the papers of the  
late Diedrich Knickerbocker*

*A pleasing land of drowsy  
head it was,  
Of dreams that wave  
before the half-shut eye;  
And of gay castles in the  
clouds that pass,  
Forever flushing round a  
summer sky.*

*CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.*

In the bosom of one of those spacious coves which indent the eastern shore of the Hudson, at that broad expansion of the river denominated by the ancient Dutch navigators the Tappan Zee, and where they always prudently shortened sail and implored the protection of St. Nicholas when they crossed, there lies a small market town or rural port, which by some is called Greensburgh, but which is more generally and properly known by the name of Tarry Town. This name was given, we are told, in former days, by the good housewives of the adjacent country, from the inveterate propensity of their husbands to linger about the village tavern on market days. Be that as it may, I do not vouch for the fact, but merely advert to it, for the sake of being precise and authentic. Not far from this village, perhaps about two miles, there is a little valley or rather lap of land among high hills, which is one of the quietest

places in the whole world. A small brook glides through it, with just murmur enough to lull one to repose; and the occasional whistle of a quail or tapping of a woodpecker is almost the only sound that ever breaks in upon the uniform tranquility.

I recollect that, when a stripling, my first exploit in squirrel-shooting was in a grove of tall walnut-trees that shades one side of the valley. I had wandered into it at noontime, when all nature is peculiarly quiet, and was startled by the roar of my own gun, as it broke the Sabbath stillness around and was prolonged and reverberated by the angry echoes. If ever I should wish for a retreat whither I might steal from the world and its distractions, and dream quietly away the remnant of a troubled life, I know of none more promising than this little valley.

From the listless repose of the place, and the peculiar character of its inhabitants, who are descendants from the original Dutch settlers, this sequestered glen has long been known by the name of SLEEPY HOLLOW, and its rustic lads are called the Sleepy Hollow Boys throughout all the neighboring country. A drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land, and to pervade the very atmosphere. Some say that the place was bewitched by a High German doctor, during the early days of the settlement; others, that an old Indian chief, the prophet or wizard of his tribe, held his powwows there before the country was discovered by Master Hendrick Hudson. Certain it is, the place still continues under the sway of some

witching power, that holds a spell over the minds of the good people, causing them to walk in a continual reverie. They are given to all kinds of marvelous beliefs, are subject to trances and visions, and frequently see strange sights, and hear music and voices in the air. The whole neighborhood abounds with local tales, haunted spots, and twilight superstitions; stars shoot and meteors glare oftener across the valley than in any other part of the country, and the nightmare, with her whole ninefold, seems to make it the favorite scene of her gambols.

The dominant spirit, however, that haunts this enchanted region, and seems to be commander-in-chief of all the powers of the air, is the apparition of a figure on horseback, without a head. It is said by some to be the ghost of a Hessian trooper, whose head had been carried away by a cannon-ball, in some nameless battle during the Revolutionary War, and who is ever and anon seen by the country folk hurrying along in the gloom of night, as if on the wings of the wind. His haunts are not confined to the valley, but extend at times to the adjacent roads, and especially to the vicinity of a church at no great distance. Indeed, certain of the most authentic historians of those parts, who have been careful in collecting and collating the floating facts concerning this spectre, allege that the body of the trooper having been buried in the churchyard, the ghost rides forth to the scene of battle in nightly quest of his head, and that the rushing speed with which he sometimes passes along the Hollow, like a midnight blast, is owing to

his being belated, and in a hurry to get back to the churchyard before daybreak.

Such is the general purport of this legendary superstition, which has furnished materials for many a wild story in that region of shadows; and the spectre is known at all the country firesides, by the name of the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow.

It is remarkable that the visionary propensity I have mentioned is not confined to the native inhabitants of the valley, but is unconsciously imbibed by everyone who resides there for a time. However wide awake they may have been before they entered that sleepy region, they are sure, in a little time, to inhale the witching influence of the air, and begin to grow imaginative, to dream dreams, and see apparitions.

I mention this peaceful spot with all possible laud, for it is in such little retired Dutch valleys, found here and there embosomed in the great State of New York, that population, manners, and customs remain fixed, while the great torrent of migration and improvement, which is making such incessant changes in other parts of this restless country, sweeps by them unobserved. They are like those little nooks of still water, which border a rapid stream, where we may see the straw and bubble riding quietly at anchor, or slowly revolving in their mimic harbor, undisturbed by the rush of the passing current. Though many years have elapsed since I trod the drowsy shades of Sleepy Hollow, yet I question whether I should not still find the same trees and

the same families vegetating in its sheltered bosom.

In this by-place of nature there abode, in a remote period of American history, that is to say, some thirty years since, a worthy wight of the name of Ichabod Crane, who sojourned, or, as he expressed it, "tarried," in Sleepy Hollow, for the purpose of instructing the children of the vicinity. He was a native of Connecticut, a State which supplies the Union with pioneers for the mind as well as for the forest, and sends forth yearly its legions of frontier woodmen and country schoolmasters. The cognomen of Crane was not inapplicable to his person. He was tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his whole frame most loosely hung together. His head was small, and flat at top, with huge ears, large green glassy eyes, and a long snipe nose, so that it looked like a weather-cock perched upon his spindle neck to tell which way the wind blew. To see him striding along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him, one might have mistaken him for the genius of famine descending upon the earth, or some scarecrow eloped from a cornfield.

His schoolhouse was a low building of one large room, rudely constructed of logs; the windows partly glazed, and partly patched with leaves of old copybooks. It was most ingeniously secured at vacant hours, by a withe twisted in the handle of the door, and

stakes set against the window shutters; so that though a thief might get in with perfect ease, he would find some embarrassment in getting out,—an idea most probably borrowed by the architect, Yost Van Houten, from the mystery of an eelpot. The schoolhouse stood in a rather lonely but pleasant situation, just at the foot of a woody hill, with a brook running close by, and a formidable birch-tree growing at one end of it. From hence the low murmur of his pupils' voices, conning over their lessons, might be heard in a drowsy summer's day, like the hum of a beehive; interrupted now and then by the authoritative voice of the master, in the tone of menace or command, or, peradventure, by the appalling sound of the birch, as he urged some tardy loiterer along the flowery path of knowledge. Truth to say, he was a conscientious man, and ever bore in mind the golden maxim, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." Ichabod Crane's scholars certainly were not spoiled.

I would not have it imagined, however, that he was one of those cruel potentates of the school who joy in the smart of their subjects; on the contrary, he administered justice with discrimination rather than severity; taking the burden off the backs of the weak, and laying it on those of the strong. Your mere puny stripling, that winced at the least flourish of the rod, was passed by with indulgence; but the claims of justice were satisfied by inflicting a double portion on some little tough wrong-headed, broad-skirted Dutch urchin, who sulked and swelled and grew dogged and sullen

beneath the birch. All this he called "doing his duty by their parents;" and he never inflicted a chastisement without following it by the assurance, so consolatory to the smarting urchin, that "he would remember it and thank him for it the longest day he had to live."

When school hours were over, he was even the companion and playmate of the larger boys; and on holiday afternoons would convoy some of the smaller ones home, who happened to have pretty sisters, or good housewives for mothers, noted for the comforts of the cupboard. Indeed, it behooved him to keep on good terms with his pupils. The revenue arising from his school was small, and would have been scarcely sufficient to furnish him with daily bread, for he was a huge feeder, and, though lank, had the dilating powers of an anaconda; but to help out his maintenance, he was, according to country custom in those parts, boarded and lodged at the houses of the farmers whose children he instructed. With these he lived successively a week at a time, thus going the rounds of the neighborhood, with all his worldly effects tied up in a cotton handkerchief.

That all this might not be too onerous on the purses of his rustic patrons, who are apt to consider the costs of schooling a grievous burden, and schoolmasters as mere drones, he had various ways of rendering himself both useful and agreeable. He assisted the farmers occasionally in the lighter labors of their farms, helped to make hay, mended the fences, took the horses to water, drove the cows from pasture, and cut wood for

the winter fire. He laid aside, too, all the dominant dignity and absolute sway with which he lorded it in his little empire, the school, and became wonderfully gentle and ingratiating. He found favor in the eyes of the mothers by petting the children, particularly the youngest; and like the lion bold, which whilom so magnanimously the lamb did hold, he would sit with a child on one knee, and rock a cradle with his foot for whole hours together.

In addition to his other vocations, he was the singing-master of the neighborhood, and picked up many bright shillings by instructing the young folks in psalmody. It was a matter of no little vanity to him on Sundays, to take his station in front of the church gallery, with a band of chosen singers; where, in his own mind, he completely carried away the palm from the parson. Certain it is, his voice resounded far above all the rest of the congregation; and there are peculiar quavers still to be heard in that church, and which may even be heard half a mile off, quite to the opposite side of the millpond, on a still Sunday morning, which are said to be legitimately descended from the nose of Ichabod Crane. Thus, by divers little makeshifts, in that ingenious way which is commonly denominated "by hook and by crook," the worthy pedagogue got on tolerably enough, and was thought, by all who understood nothing of the labor of headwork, to have a wonderfully easy life of it.

The schoolmaster is generally a man of some importance in the female circle of a



rural neighborhood; being considered a kind of idle, gentlemanlike personage, of vastly superior taste and accomplishments to the rough country swains, and, indeed, inferior in learning only to the parson. His appearance, therefore, is apt to occasion some little stir at the tea-table of a farmhouse, and the addition of a supernumerary dish of cakes or sweetmeats, or, peradventure, the parade of a silver teapot. Our man of letters, therefore, was peculiarly happy in the smiles of all the country damsels. How he would figure among them in the churchyard, between services on Sundays; gathering grapes for them from the wild vines that overran the surrounding trees; reciting for their amusement all the epitaphs on the tombstones; or sauntering, with a whole bevy of them, along the banks of the adjacent millpond; while the more bashful country bumpkins hung sheepishly back, envying his superior elegance and address.

From his half-itinerant life, also, he was a kind of travelling gazette, carrying the whole budget of local gossip from house to house, so that his appearance was always greeted with satisfaction. He was, moreover, esteemed by the women as a man of great erudition, for he had read several books quite through, and was a perfect master of Cotton Mather's "History of New England Witchcraft," in which, by the way, he most firmly and potently believed.

He was, in fact, an odd mixture of small shrewdness and simple credulity. His appetite for the marvelous, and his

powers of digesting it, were equally extraordinary; and both had been increased by his residence in this spell-bound region. No tale was too gross or monstrous for his capacious swallow. It was often his delight, after his school was dismissed in the afternoon, to stretch himself on the rich bed of clover bordering the little brook that whimpered by his schoolhouse, and there con over old Mather's direful tales, until the gathering dusk of evening made the printed page a mere mist before his eyes. Then, as he wended his way by swamp and stream and awful woodland, to the farmhouse where he happened to be quartered, every sound of nature, at that witching hour, fluttered his excited imagination,—the moan of the whip-poor-will from the hillside, the boding cry of the tree toad, that harbinger of storm, the dreary hooting of the screech owl, or the sudden rustling in the thicket of birds frightened from their roost. The fireflies, too, which sparkled most vividly in the darkest places, now and then startled him, as one of uncommon brightness would stream across his path; and if, by chance, a huge blockhead of a beetle came winging his blundering flight against him, the poor varlet was ready to give up the ghost, with the idea that he was struck with a witch's token. His only resource on such occasions, either to drown thought or drive away evil spirits, was to sing psalm tunes and the good people of Sleepy Hollow, as they sat by their doors of an evening, were often filled with awe at hearing his nasal melody, "in linked sweetness long drawn

out," floating from the distant hill, or along the dusky road.

Another of his sources of fearful pleasure was to pass long winter evenings with the old Dutch wives, as they sat spinning by the fire, with a row of apples roasting and spluttering along the hearth, and listen to their marvelous tales of ghosts and goblins, and haunted fields, and haunted brooks, and haunted bridges, and haunted houses, and particularly of the headless horseman, or Galloping Hessian of the Hollow, as they sometimes called him. He would delight them equally by his anecdotes of witchcraft, and of the direful omens and portentous sights and sounds in the air, which prevailed in the earlier times of Connecticut; and would frighten them woefully with speculations upon comets and shooting stars; and with the alarming fact that the world did absolutely turn round, and that they were half the time topsy-turvy!

But if there was a pleasure in all this, while snugly cuddling in the chimney corner of a chamber that was all of a ruddy glow from the crackling wood fire, and where, of course, no spectre dared to show its face, it was dearly purchased by the terrors of his subsequent walk homewards. What fearful shapes and shadows beset his path, amidst the dim and ghastly glare of a snowy night! With what wistful look did he eye every trembling ray of light streaming across the waste fields from some distant window! How often was he appalled by some shrub covered with snow, which, like a sheeted spectre, beset his very

path! How often did he shrink with curdling awe at the sound of his own steps on the frosty crust beneath his feet; and dread to look over his shoulder, lest he should behold some uncouth being tramping close behind him! And how often was he thrown into complete dismay by some rushing blast, howling among the trees, in the idea that it was the Galloping Hessian on one of his nightly scourings!

All these, however, were mere terrors of the night, phantoms of the mind that walk in darkness; and though he had seen many spectres in his time, and been more than once beset by Satan in divers shapes, in his lonely perambulations, yet daylight put an end to all these evils; and he would have passed a pleasant life of it, in despite of the Devil and all his works, if his path had not been crossed by a being that causes more perplexity to mortal man than ghosts, goblins, and the whole race of witches put together, and that was—a woman.

Among the musical disciples who assembled, one evening in each week, to receive his instructions in psalmody, was Katrina Van Tassel, the daughter and only child of a substantial Dutch farmer. She was a blooming lass of fresh eighteen; plump as a partridge; ripe and melting and rosy-cheeked as one of her father's peaches, and universally famed, not merely for her beauty, but her vast expectations. She was withal a little of a coquette, as might be perceived even in her dress, which was a mixture of ancient and modern fashions, as most suited to set off her charms. She wore the

ornaments of pure yellow gold, which her great-great-grandmother had brought over from Saardam; the tempting stomacher of the olden time, and withal a provokingly short petticoat, to display the prettiest foot and ankle in the country round.

Ichabod Crane had a soft and foolish heart towards the sex; and it is not to be wondered at that so tempting a morsel soon found favor in his eyes, more especially after he had visited her in her paternal mansion. Old Baltus Van Tassel was a perfect picture of a thriving, contented, liberal-hearted farmer. He seldom, it is true, sent either his eyes or his thoughts beyond the boundaries of his own farm; but within those everything was snug, happy and well-conditioned. He was satisfied with his wealth, but not proud of it; and piqued himself upon the hearty abundance, rather than the style in which he lived. His stronghold was situated on the banks of the Hudson, in one of those green, sheltered, fertile nooks in which the Dutch farmers are so fond of nestling. A great elm tree spread its broad branches over it, at the foot of which bubbled up a spring of the softest and sweetest water, in a little well formed of a barrel; and then stole sparkling away through the grass, to a neighboring brook, that babbled along among alders and dwarf willows. Hard by the farmhouse was a vast barn, that might have served for a church; every window and crevice of which seemed bursting forth with the treasures of the farm; the flail was busily resounding within it from morning to night; swallows and martins

skimmed twittering about the eaves; and rows of pigeons, some with one eye turned up, as if watching the weather, some with their heads under their wings or buried in their bosoms, and others swelling, and cooing, and bowing about their dames, were enjoying the sunshine on the roof. Sleek unwieldy porkers were grunting in the repose and abundance of their pens, from whence sallied forth, now and then, troops of sucking pigs, as if to snuff the air. A stately squadron of snowy geese were riding in an adjoining pond, convoying whole fleets of ducks; regiments of turkeys were gobbling through the farmyard, and Guinea fowls fretting about it, like ill-tempered housewives, with their peevish, discontented cry. Before the barn door strutted the gallant cock, that pattern of a husband, a warrior and a fine gentleman, clapping his burnished wings and crowing in the pride and gladness of his heart,—sometimes tearing up the earth with his feet, and then generously calling his ever-hungry family of wives and children to enjoy the rich morsel which he had discovered.

The pedagogue's mouth watered as he looked upon this sumptuous promise of luxurious winter fare. In his devouring mind's eye, he pictured to himself every roasting-pig running about with a pudding in his belly, and an apple in his mouth; the pigeons were snugly put to bed in a comfortable pie, and tucked in with a coverlet of crust; the geese were swimming in their own gravy; and the ducks pairing cosily in dishes, like snug married couples, with a decent

competency of onion sauce. In the porkers he saw carved out the future sleek side of bacon, and juicy relishing ham; not a turkey but he beheld daintily trussed up, with its gizzard under its wing, and, peradventure, a necklace of savory sausages; and even bright chanticleer himself lay sprawling on his back, in a side dish, with uplifted claws, as if craving that quarter which his chivalrous spirit disdained to ask while living.

As the enraptured Ichabod fancied all this, and as he rolled his great green eyes over the fat meadow lands, the rich fields of wheat, of rye, of buckwheat, and Indian corn, and the orchards burdened with ruddy fruit, which surrounded the warm tenement of Van Tassel, his heart yearned after the damsel who was to inherit these domains, and his imagination expanded with the idea, how they might be readily turned into cash, and the money invested in immense tracts of wild land, and shingle palaces in the wilderness. Nay, his busy fancy already realized his hopes, and presented to him the blooming Katrina, with a whole family of children, mounted on the top of a wagon loaded with household trumpery, with pots and kettles dangling beneath; and he beheld himself bestriding a pacing mare, with a colt at her heels, setting out for Kentucky, Tennessee,—or the Lord knows where!

When he entered the house, the conquest of his heart was complete. It was one of those spacious farmhouses, with high-ridged but lowly sloping roofs, built in the style handed down from the first Dutch settlers; the low projecting

eaves forming a piazza along the front, capable of being closed up in bad weather. Under this were hung flails, harness, various utensils of husbandry, and nets for fishing in the neighboring river. Benches were built along the sides for summer use; and a great spinning-wheel at one end, and a churn at the other, showed the various uses to which this important porch might be devoted. From this piazza the wondering Ichabod entered the hall, which formed the centre of the mansion, and the place of usual residence. Here rows of resplendent pewter, ranged on a long dresser, dazzled his eyes. In one corner stood a huge bag of wool, ready to be spun; in another, a quantity of linsey-woolsey just from the loom; ears of Indian corn, and strings of dried apples and peaches, hung in gay festoons along the walls, mingled with the gaud of red peppers; and a door left ajar gave him a peep into the best parlor, where the claw-footed chairs and dark mahogany tables shone like mirrors; andirons, with their accompanying shovel and tongs, glistened from their covert of asparagus tops; mock-oranges and conch-shells decorated the mantelpiece; strings of various-colored birds eggs were suspended above it; a great ostrich egg was hung from the centre of the room, and a corner cupboard, knowingly left open, displayed immense treasures of old silver and well-mended china.

From the moment Ichabod laid his eyes upon these regions of delight, the peace of his mind was at an end, and his only study was how to gain the affections of the peerless daughter of Van Tassel. In

this enterprise, however, he had more real difficulties than generally fell to the lot of a knight-errant of yore, who seldom had anything but giants, enchanters, fiery dragons, and such like easily conquered adversaries, to contend with and had to make his way merely through gates of iron and brass, and walls of adamant to the castle keep, where the lady of his heart was confined; all which he achieved as easily as a man would carve his way to the centre of a Christmas pie; and then the lady gave him her hand as a matter of course. Ichabod, on the contrary, had to win his way to the heart of a country coquette, beset with a labyrinth of whims and caprices, which were forever presenting new difficulties and impediments; and he had to encounter a host of fearful adversaries of real flesh and blood, the numerous rustic admirers, who beset every portal to her heart, keeping a watchful and angry eye upon each other, but ready to fly out in the common cause against any new competitor.

Among these, the most formidable was a burly, roaring, roystering blade, of the name of Abraham, or, according to the Dutch abbreviation, Brom Van Brunt, the hero of the country round, which rang with his feats of strength and hardihood. He was broad-shouldered and double-jointed, with short curly black hair, and a bluff but not unpleasant countenance, having a mingled air of fun and arrogance. From his Herculean frame and great powers of limb he had received the nickname of BROM BONES, by which he was universally known. He was famed for

great knowledge and skill in horsemanship, being as dexterous on horseback as a Tartar. He was foremost at all races and cock fights; and, with the ascendancy which bodily strength always acquires in rustic life, was the umpire in all disputes, setting his hat on one side, and giving his decisions with an air and tone that admitted of no gainsay or appeal. He was always ready for either a fight or a frolic; but had more mischief than ill-will in his composition; and with all his overbearing roughness, there was a strong dash of waggish good humor at bottom. He had three or four boon companions, who regarded him as their model, and at the head of whom he scoured the country, attending every scene of feud or merriment for miles round. In cold weather he was distinguished by a fur cap, surmounted with a flaunting fox's tail; and when the folks at a country gathering descried this well-known crest at a distance, whisking about among a squad of hard riders, they always stood by for a squall. Sometimes his crew would be heard dashing along past the farmhouses at midnight, with whoop and halloo, like a troop of Don Cossacks; and the old dames, startled out of their sleep, would listen for a moment till the hurry-scurry had clattered by, and then exclaim, "Ay, there goes Brom Bones and his gang!" The neighbors looked upon him with a mixture of awe, admiration, and good-will; and, when any madcap prank or rustic brawl occurred in the vicinity, always shook their heads, and warranted Brom Bones was at the bottom of it.

This rantipole hero had for some time singled out the blooming Katrina for the object of his uncouth gallantries, and though his amorous toyings were something like the gentle caresses and endearments of a bear, yet it was whispered that she did not altogether discourage his hopes. Certain it is, his advances were signals for rival candidates to retire, who felt no inclination to cross a lion in his amours; insomuch, that when his horse was seen tied to Van Tassel's paling, on a Sunday night, a sure sign that his master was courting, or, as it is termed, "sparking," within, all other suitors passed by in despair, and carried the war into other quarters.

Such was the formidable rival with whom Ichabod Crane had to contend, and, considering all things, a stouter man than he would have shrunk from the competition, and a wiser man would have despaired. He had, however, a happy mixture of pliability and perseverance in his nature; he was in form and spirit like a supple-jack—yielding, but tough; though he bent, he never broke; and though he bowed beneath the slightest pressure, yet, the moment it was away—jerk!—he was as erect, and carried his head as high as ever.

To have taken the field openly against his rival would have been madness; for he was not a man to be thwarted in his amours, any more than that stormy lover, Achilles. Ichabod, therefore, made his advances in a quiet and gently insinuating manner. Under cover of his character of singing-master, he made

frequent visits at the farmhouse; not that he had anything to apprehend from the meddlesome interference of parents, which is so often a stumbling-block in the path of lovers. Balt Van Tassel was an easy indulgent soul; he loved his daughter better even than his pipe, and, like a reasonable man and an excellent father, let her have her way in everything. His notable little wife, too, had enough to do to attend to her housekeeping and manage her poultry; for, as she sagely observed, ducks and geese are foolish things, and must be looked after, but girls can take care of themselves. Thus, while the busy dame bustled about the house, or plied her spinning-wheel at one end of the piazza, honest Balt would sit smoking his evening pipe at the other, watching the achievements of a little wooden warrior, who, armed with a sword in each hand, was most valiantly fighting the wind on the pinnacle of the barn. In the mean time, Ichabod would carry on his suit with the daughter by the side of the spring under the great elm, or sauntering along in the twilight, that hour so favorable to the lover's eloquence.

I profess not to know how women's hearts are wooed and won. To me they have always been matters of riddle and admiration. Some seem to have but one vulnerable point, or door of access; while others have a thousand avenues, and may be captured in a thousand different ways. It is a great triumph of skill to gain the former, but a still greater proof of generalship to maintain possession of the latter, for man must battle for his fortress at every door and window. He

who wins a thousand common hearts is therefore entitled to some renown; but he who keeps undisputed sway over the heart of a coquette is indeed a hero. Certain it is, this was not the case with the redoubtable Brom Bones; and from the moment Ichabod Crane made his advances, the interests of the former evidently declined: his horse was no longer seen tied to the palings on Sunday nights, and a deadly feud gradually arose between him and the preceptor of Sleepy Hollow.

Brom, who had a degree of rough chivalry in his nature, would fain have carried matters to open warfare and have settled their pretensions to the lady, according to the mode of those most concise and simple reasoners, the knights-errant of yore,—by single combat; but Ichabod was too conscious of the superior might of his adversary to enter the lists against him; he had overheard a boast of Bones, that he would “double the schoolmaster up, and lay him on a shelf of his own schoolhouse;” and he was too wary to give him an opportunity. There was something extremely provoking in this obstinately pacific system; it left Brom no alternative but to draw upon the funds of rustic waggery in his disposition, and to play off boorish practical jokes upon his rival. Ichabod became the object of whimsical persecution to Bones and his gang of rough riders. They harried his hitherto peaceful domains; smoked out his singing school by stopping up the chimney; broke into the schoolhouse at night, in spite of its formidable fastenings

of withe and window stakes, and turned everything topsy-turvy, so that the poor schoolmaster began to think all the witches in the country held their meetings there. But what was still more annoying, Brom took all opportunities of turning him into ridicule in presence of his mistress, and had a scoundrel dog whom he taught to whine in the most ludicrous manner, and introduced as a rival of Ichabod’s, to instruct her in psalmody.

In this way matters went on for some time, without producing any material effect on the relative situations of the contending powers. On a fine autumnal afternoon, Ichabod, in pensive mood, sat enthroned on the lofty stool from whence he usually watched all the concerns of his little literary realm. In his hand he swayed a ferule, that sceptre of despotic power; the birch of justice reposed on three nails behind the throne, a constant terror to evil doers, while on the desk before him might be seen sundry contraband articles and prohibited weapons, detected upon the persons of idle urchins, such as half-munched apples, popguns, whirligigs, fly-cages, and whole legions of rampant little paper gamecocks. Apparently there had been some appalling act of justice recently inflicted, for his scholars were all busily intent upon their books, or slyly whispering behind them with one eye kept upon the master; and a kind of buzzing stillness reigned throughout the schoolroom. It was suddenly interrupted by the appearance of a negro in tow-cloth jacket and trowsers, a round-

crowned fragment of a hat, like the cap of Mercury, and mounted on the back of a ragged, wild, half-broken colt, which he managed with a rope by way of halter. He came clattering up to the school door with an invitation to Ichabod to attend a merry-making or "quilting frolic," to be held that evening at Mynheer Van Tassel's; and having delivered his message with that air of importance, and effort at fine language, which a negro is apt to display on petty embassies of the kind, he dashed over the brook, and was seen scampering away up the hollow, full of the importance and hurry of his mission.

All was now bustle and hubbub in the late quiet schoolroom. The scholars were hurried through their lessons without stopping at trifles; those who were nimble skipped over half with impunity, and those who were tardy had a smart application now and then in the rear, to quicken their speed or help them over a tall word. Books were flung aside without being put away on the shelves, inkstands were overturned, benches thrown down, and the whole school was turned loose an hour before the usual time, bursting forth like a legion of young imps, yelping and racketing about the green in joy at their early emancipation.

The gallant Ichabod now spent at least an extra half hour at his toilet, brushing and furbishing up his best, and indeed only suit of rusty black, and arranging his locks by a bit of broken looking-glass that hung up in the schoolhouse. That he might make his appearance before his mistress in the true style of a cavalier, he

borrowed a horse from the farmer with whom he was domiciliated, a choleric old Dutchman of the name of Hans Van Ripper, and, thus gallantly mounted, issued forth like a knight-errant in quest of adventures. But it is meet I should, in the true spirit of romantic story, give some account of the looks and equipments of my hero and his steed. The animal he bestrode was a broken-down plow-horse, that had outlived almost everything but its viciousness. He was gaunt and shagged, with a ewe neck, and a head like a hammer; his rusty mane and tail were tangled and knotted with burs; one eye had lost its pupil, and was glaring and spectral, but the other had the gleam of a genuine devil in it. Still he must have had fire and mettle in his day, if we may judge from the name he bore of Gunpowder. He had, in fact, been a favorite steed of his master's, the choleric Van Ripper, who was a furious rider, and had infused, very probably, some of his own spirit into the animal; for, old and broken-down as he looked, there was more of the lurking devil in him than in any young filly in the country.

Ichabod was a suitable figure for such a steed. He rode with short stirrups, which brought his knees nearly up to the pommel of the saddle; his sharp elbows stuck out like grasshoppers'; he carried his whip perpendicularly in his hand, like a sceptre, and as his horse jogged on, the motion of his arms was not unlike the flapping of a pair of wings. A small wool hat rested on the top of his nose, for so his scanty strip of forehead might be called, and the skirts of his black coat



fluttered out almost to the horses tail. Such was the appearance of Ichabod and his steed as they shambled out of the gate of Hans Van Ripper, and it was altogether such an apparition as is seldom to be met with in broad daylight.

It was, as I have said, a fine autumnal day; the sky was clear and serene, and nature wore that rich and golden livery which we always associate with the idea of abundance. The forests had put on their sober brown and yellow, while some trees of the tenderer kind had been nipped by the frosts into brilliant dyes of orange, purple, and scarlet. Streaming files of wild ducks began to make their appearance high in the air; the bark of the squirrel might be heard from the groves of beech and hickory-nuts, and the pensive whistle of the quail at intervals from the neighboring stubble field.

The small birds were taking their farewell banquets. In the fullness of their revelry, they fluttered, chirping and frolicking from bush to bush, and tree to tree, capricious from the very profusion and variety around them. There was the honest cock robin, the favorite game of stripling sportsmen, with its loud querulous note; and the twittering blackbirds flying in sable clouds; and the golden-winged woodpecker with his crimson crest, his broad black gorget, and splendid plumage; and the cedar bird, with its red-tipt wings and yellow-tipt tail and its little monteiro cap of feathers; and the blue jay, that noisy coxcomb, in his gay light blue coat and white underclothes, screaming and chattering, nodding and bobbing and

bowing, and pretending to be on good terms with every songster of the grove.

As Ichabod jogged slowly on his way, his eye, ever open to every symptom of culinary abundance, ranged with delight over the treasures of jolly autumn. On all sides he beheld vast store of apples; some hanging in oppressive opulence on the trees; some gathered into baskets and barrels for the market; others heaped up in rich piles for the cider-press. Farther on he beheld great fields of Indian corn, with its golden ears peeping from their leafy coverts, and holding out the promise of cakes and hasty-pudding; and the yellow pumpkins lying beneath them, turning up their fair round bellies to the sun, and giving ample prospects of the most luxurious of pies; and anon he passed the fragrant buckwheat fields breathing the odor of the beehive, and as he beheld them, soft anticipations stole over his mind of dainty slapjacks, well buttered, and garnished with honey or treacle, by the delicate little dimpled hand of Katrina Van Tassel.

Thus feeding his mind with many sweet thoughts and "sugared suppositions," he journeyed along the sides of a range of hills which look out upon some of the goodliest scenes of the mighty Hudson. The sun gradually wheeled his broad disk down in the west. The wide bosom of the Tappan Zee lay motionless and glassy, excepting that here and there a gentle undulation waved and prolonged the blue shadow of the distant mountain. A few amber clouds floated in the sky, without a breath of air to move them. The horizon was of a fine golden tint,

changing gradually into a pure apple green, and from that into the deep blue of the mid-heaven. A slanting ray lingered on the woody crests of the precipices that overhung some parts of the river, giving greater depth to the dark gray and purple of their rocky sides. A sloop was loitering in the distance, dropping slowly down with the tide, her sail hanging uselessly against the mast; and as the reflection of the sky gleamed along the still water, it seemed as if the vessel was suspended in the air.

It was toward evening that Ichabod arrived at the castle of the Heer Van Tassel, which he found thronged with the pride and flower of the adjacent country. Old farmers, a spare leathern-faced race, in homespun coats and breeches, blue stockings, huge shoes, and magnificent pewter buckles. Their brisk, withered little dames, in close-crimped caps, long-waisted short gowns, homespun petticoats, with scissors and pincushions, and gay calico pockets hanging on the outside. Buxom lasses, almost as antiquated as their mothers, excepting where a straw hat, a fine ribbon, or perhaps a white frock, gave symptoms of city innovation. The sons, in short square-skirted coats, with rows of stupendous brass buttons, and their hair generally queued in the fashion of the times, especially if they could procure an eel-skin for the purpose, it being esteemed throughout the country as a potent nourisher and strengthener of the hair.

Brom Bones, however, was the hero of the scene, having come to the gathering on his favorite steed Daredevil, a

creature, like himself, full of mettle and mischief, and which no one but himself could manage. He was, in fact, noted for preferring vicious animals, given to all kinds of tricks which kept the rider in constant risk of his neck, for he held a tractable, well-broken horse as unworthy of a lad of spirit.

Fain would I pause to dwell upon the world of charms that burst upon the enraptured gaze of my hero, as he entered the state parlor of Van Tassel's mansion. Not those of the bevy of buxom lasses, with their luxurious display of red and white; but the ample charms of a genuine Dutch country tea-table, in the sumptuous time of autumn. Such heaped up platters of cakes of various and almost indescribable kinds, known only to experienced Dutch housewives! There was the doughty doughnut, the tender oly koek, and the crisp and crumbling cruller; sweet cakes and short cakes, ginger cakes and honey cakes, and the whole family of cakes. And then there were apple pies, and peach pies, and pumpkin pies; besides slices of ham and smoked beef; and moreover delectable dishes of preserved plums, and peaches, and pears, and quinces; not to mention broiled shad and roasted chickens; together with bowls of milk and cream, all mingled higgledy-piggledy, pretty much as I have enumerated them, with the motherly teapot sending up its clouds of vapor from the midst—Heaven bless the mark! I want breath and time to discuss this banquet as it deserves, and am too eager to get on with my story. Happily, Ichabod Crane was not in so

great a hurry as his historian, but did ample justice to every dainty.

He was a kind and thankful creature, whose heart dilated in proportion as his skin was filled with good cheer, and whose spirits rose with eating, as some men's do with drink. He could not help, too, rolling his large eyes round him as he ate, and chuckling with the possibility that he might one day be lord of all this scene of almost unimaginable luxury and splendor. Then, he thought, how soon he'd turn his back upon the old schoolhouse; snap his fingers in the face of Hans Van Ripper, and every other niggardly patron, and kick any itinerant pedagogue out of doors that should dare to call him comrade!

Old Baltus Van Tassel moved about among his guests with a face dilated with content and good humor, round and jolly as the harvest moon. His hospitable attentions were brief, but expressive, being confined to a shake of the hand, a slap on the shoulder, a loud laugh, and a pressing invitation to "fall to, and help themselves."

And now the sound of the music from the common room, or hall, summoned to the dance. The musician was an old gray-headed negro, who had been the itinerant orchestra of the neighborhood for more than half a century. His instrument was as old and battered as himself. The greater part of the time he scraped on two or three strings, accompanying every movement of the bow with a motion of the head; bowing almost to the ground, and stamping with

his foot whenever a fresh couple were to start.

Ichabod prided himself upon his dancing as much as upon his vocal powers. Not a limb, not a fibre about him was idle; and to have seen his loosely hung frame in full motion, and clattering about the room, you would have thought St. Vitus himself, that blessed patron of the dance, was figuring before you in person. He was the admiration of all the negroes; who, having gathered, of all ages and sizes, from the farm and the neighborhood, stood forming a pyramid of shining black faces at every door and window, gazing with delight at the scene, rolling their white eyeballs, and showing grinning rows of ivory from ear to ear. How could the flogger of urchins be otherwise than animated and joyous? The lady of his heart was his partner in the dance, and smiling graciously in reply to all his amorous oglings; while Brom Bones, sorely smitten with love and jealousy, sat brooding by himself in one corner.

When the dance was at an end, Ichabod was attracted to a knot of the sager folks, who, with Old Van Tassel, sat smoking at one end of the piazza, gossiping over former times, and drawing out long stories about the war.

This neighborhood, at the time of which I am speaking, was one of those highly favored places which abound with chronicle and great men. The British and American line had run near it during the war; it had, therefore, been the scene of marauding and infested with refugees, cowboys, and all kinds of border chivalry.

Just sufficient time had elapsed to enable each storyteller to dress up his tale with a little becoming fiction, and, in the indistinctness of his recollection, to make himself the hero of every exploit.

There was the story of Doffue Martling, a large blue-bearded Dutchman, who had nearly taken a British frigate with an old iron nine-pounder from a mud breastwork, only that his gun burst at the sixth discharge. And there was an old gentleman who shall be nameless, being too rich a mynheer to be lightly mentioned, who, in the battle of White Plains, being an excellent master of defence, parried a musket-ball with a small sword, insomuch that he absolutely felt it whiz round the blade, and glance off at the hilt; in proof of which he was ready at any time to show the sword, with the hilt a little bent. There were several more that had been equally great in the field, not one of whom but was persuaded that he had a considerable hand in bringing the war to a happy termination.

But all these were nothing to the tales of ghosts and apparitions that succeeded. The neighborhood is rich in legendary treasures of the kind. Local tales and superstitions thrive best in these sheltered, long-settled retreats; but are trampled under foot by the shifting throng that forms the population of most of our country places. Besides, there is no encouragement for ghosts in most of our villages, for they have scarcely had time to finish their first nap and turn themselves in their graves, before their surviving friends have travelled away

from the neighborhood; so that when they turn out at night to walk their rounds, they have no acquaintance left to call upon. This is perhaps the reason why we so seldom hear of ghosts except in our long-established Dutch communities.

The immediate cause, however, of the prevalence of supernatural stories in these parts, was doubtless owing to the vicinity of Sleepy Hollow. There was a contagion in the very air that blew from that haunted region; it breathed forth an atmosphere of dreams and fancies infecting all the land. Several of the Sleepy Hollow people were present at Van Tassel's, and, as usual, were doling out their wild and wonderful legends. Many dismal tales were told about funeral trains, and mourning cries and wailings heard and seen about the great tree where the unfortunate Major André was taken, and which stood in the neighborhood. Some mention was made also of the woman in white, that haunted the dark glen at Raven Rock, and was often heard to shriek on winter nights before a storm, having perished there in the snow. The chief part of the stories, however, turned upon the favorite spectre of Sleepy Hollow, the Headless Horseman, who had been heard several times of late, patrolling the country; and, it was said, tethered his horse nightly among the graves in the churchyard.

The sequestered situation of this church seems always to have made it a favorite haunt of troubled spirits. It stands on a knoll, surrounded by locust-trees and lofty elms, from among which its decent, whitewashed walls shine

modestly forth, like Christian purity beaming through the shades of retirement. A gentle slope descends from it to a silver sheet of water, bordered by high trees, between which, peeps may be caught at the blue hills of the Hudson. To look upon its grass-grown yard, where the sunbeams seem to sleep so quietly, one would think that there at least the dead might rest in peace. On one side of the church extends a wide woody dell, along which raves a large brook among broken rocks and trunks of fallen trees. Over a deep black part of the stream, not far from the church, was formerly thrown a wooden bridge; the road that led to it, and the bridge itself, were thickly shaded by overhanging trees, which cast a gloom about it, even in the daytime; but occasioned a fearful darkness at night. Such was one of the favorite haunts of the Headless Horseman, and the place where he was most frequently encountered. The tale was told of old Brouwer, a most heretical disbeliever in ghosts, how he met the Horseman returning from his foray into Sleepy Hollow, and was obliged to get up behind him; how they galloped over bush and brake, over hill and swamp, until they reached the bridge; when the Horseman suddenly turned into a skeleton, threw old Brouwer into the brook, and sprang away over the tree-tops with a clap of thunder.

This story was immediately matched by a thrice marvellous adventure of Brom Bones, who made light of the Galloping Hessian as an arrant jockey. He affirmed that on returning one night from the

neighboring village of Sing Sing, he had been overtaken by this midnight trooper; that he had offered to race with him for a bowl of punch, and should have won it too, for Daredevil beat the goblin horse all hollow, but just as they came to the church bridge, the Hessian bolted, and vanished in a flash of fire.

All these tales, told in that drowsy undertone with which men talk in the dark, the countenances of the listeners only now and then receiving a casual gleam from the glare of a pipe, sank deep in the mind of Ichabod. He repaid them in kind with large extracts from his invaluable author, Cotton Mather, and added many marvellous events that had taken place in his native State of Connecticut, and fearful sights which he had seen in his nightly walks about Sleepy Hollow.

The revel now gradually broke up. The old farmers gathered together their families in their wagons, and were heard for some time rattling along the hollow roads, and over the distant hills. Some of the damsels mounted on pillions behind their favorite swains, and their light-hearted laughter, mingling with the clatter of hoofs, echoed along the silent woodlands, sounding fainter and fainter, until they gradually died away,—and the late scene of noise and frolic was all silent and deserted. Ichabod only lingered behind, according to the custom of country lovers, to have a tête-à-tête with the heiress; fully convinced that he was now on the high road to success. What passed at this interview I will not pretend to say, for in fact I do not know.

Something, however, I fear me, must have gone wrong, for he certainly sallied forth, after no very great interval, with an air quite desolate and chapfallen. Oh, these women! these women! Could that girl have been playing off any of her coquettish tricks? Was her encouragement of the poor pedagogue all a mere sham to secure her conquest of his rival? Heaven only knows, not I! Let it suffice to say, Ichabod stole forth with the air of one who had been sacking a henroost, rather than a fair lady's heart. Without looking to the right or left to notice the scene of rural wealth, on which he had so often gloated, he went straight to the stable, and with several hearty cuffs and kicks roused his steed most uncourteously from the comfortable quarters in which he was soundly sleeping, dreaming of mountains of corn and oats, and whole valleys of timothy and clover.

It was the very witching time of night that Ichabod, heavy-hearted and crestfallen, pursued his travels homewards, along the sides of the lofty hills which rise above Tarry Town, and which he had traversed so cheerily in the afternoon. The hour was as dismal as himself. Far below him the Tappan Zee spread its dusky and indistinct waste of waters, with here and there the tall mast of a sloop, riding quietly at anchor under the land. In the dead hush of midnight, he could even hear the barking of the watchdog from the opposite shore of the Hudson; but it was so vague and faint as only to give an idea of his distance from this faithful companion of man. Now and

then, too, the long-drawn crowing of a cock, accidentally awakened, would sound far, far off, from some farmhouse away among the hills—but it was like a dreaming sound in his ear. No signs of life occurred near him, but occasionally the melancholy chirp of a cricket, or perhaps the guttural twang of a bullfrog from a neighboring marsh, as if sleeping uncomfortably and turning suddenly in his bed.

All the stories of ghosts and goblins that he had heard in the afternoon now came crowding upon his recollection. The night grew darker and darker; the stars seemed to sink deeper in the sky, and driving clouds occasionally hid them from his sight. He had never felt so lonely and dismal. He was, moreover, approaching the very place where many of the scenes of the ghost stories had been laid. In the centre of the road stood an enormous tulip-tree, which towered like a giant above all the other trees of the neighborhood, and formed a kind of landmark. Its limbs were gnarled and fantastic, large enough to form trunks for ordinary trees, twisting down almost to the earth, and rising again into the air. It was connected with the tragical story of the unfortunate André, who had been taken prisoner hard by; and was universally known by the name of Major André's tree. The common people regarded it with a mixture of respect and superstition, partly out of sympathy for the fate of its ill-starred namesake, and partly from the tales of strange sights, and doleful lamentations, told concerning it.

As Ichabod approached this fearful tree, he began to whistle; he thought his whistle was answered; it was but a blast sweeping sharply through the dry branches. As he approached a little nearer, he thought he saw something white, hanging in the midst of the tree: he paused and ceased whistling but, on looking more narrowly, perceived that it was a place where the tree had been scathed by lightning, and the white wood laid bare. Suddenly he heard a groan—his teeth chattered, and his knees smote against the saddle: it was but the rubbing of one huge bough upon another, as they were swayed about by the breeze. He passed the tree in safety, but new perils lay before him.

About two hundred yards from the tree, a small brook crossed the road, and ran into a marshy and thickly-wooded glen, known by the name of Wiley's Swamp. A few rough logs, laid side by side, served for a bridge over this stream. On that side of the road where the brook entered the wood, a group of oaks and chestnuts, matted thick with wild grapevines, threw a cavernous gloom over it. To pass this bridge was the severest trial. It was at this identical spot that the unfortunate André was captured, and under the covert of those chestnuts and vines were the sturdy yeomen concealed who surprised him. This has ever since been considered a haunted stream, and fearful are the feelings of the schoolboy who has to pass it alone after dark.

As he approached the stream, his heart began to thump; he summoned up, however, all his resolution, gave his horse

half a score of kicks in the ribs, and attempted to dash briskly across the bridge; but instead of starting forward, the perverse old animal made a lateral movement, and ran broadside against the fence. Ichabod, whose fears increased with the delay, jerked the reins on the other side, and kicked lustily with the contrary foot: it was all in vain; his steed started, it is true, but it was only to plunge to the opposite side of the road into a thicket of brambles and alder bushes. The schoolmaster now bestowed both whip and heel upon the starveling ribs of old Gunpowder, who dashed forward, snuffling and snorting, but came to a stand just by the bridge, with a suddenness that had nearly sent his rider sprawling over his head. Just at this moment a plashy tramp by the side of the bridge caught the sensitive ear of Ichabod. In the dark shadow of the grove, on the margin of the brook, he beheld something huge, misshapen and towering. It stirred not, but seemed gathered up in the gloom, like some gigantic monster ready to spring upon the traveller.

The hair of the affrighted pedagogue rose upon his head with terror. What was to be done? To turn and fly was now too late; and besides, what chance was there of escaping ghost or goblin, if such it was, which could ride upon the wings of the wind? Summoning up, therefore, a show of courage, he demanded in stammering accents, "Who are you?" He received no reply. He repeated his demand in a still more agitated voice. Still there was no answer. Once more he cudgelled the

sides of the inflexible Gunpowder, and, shutting his eyes, broke forth with involuntary fervor into a psalm tune. Just then the shadowy object of alarm put itself in motion, and with a scramble and a bound stood at once in the middle of the road. Though the night was dark and dismal, yet the form of the unknown might now in some degree be ascertained. He appeared to be a horseman of large dimensions, and mounted on a black horse of powerful frame. He made no offer of molestation or sociability, but kept aloof on one side of the road, jogging along on the blind side of old Gunpowder, who had now got over his fright and waywardness.

Ichabod, who had no relish for this strange midnight companion, and bethought himself of the adventure of Brom Bones with the Galloping Hessian, now quickened his steed in hopes of leaving him behind. The stranger, however, quickened his horse to an equal pace. Ichabod pulled up, and fell into a walk, thinking to lag behind,—the other did the same. His heart began to sink within him; he endeavored to resume his psalm tune, but his parched tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, and he could not utter a stave. There was something in the moody and dogged silence of this pertinacious companion that was mysterious and appalling. It was soon fearfully accounted for. On mounting a rising ground, which brought the figure of his fellow-traveler in relief against the sky, gigantic in height, and muffled in a cloak, Ichabod was horror-struck on perceiving that he was headless!—but his

horror was still more increased on observing that the head, which should have rested on his shoulders, was carried before him on the pommel of his saddle! His terror rose to desperation; he rained a shower of kicks and blows upon Gunpowder, hoping by a sudden movement to give his companion the slip; but the spectre started full jump with him. Away, then, they dashed through thick and thin; stones flying and sparks flashing at every bound. Ichabod's flimsy garments fluttered in the air, as he stretched his long lank body away over his horse's head, in the eagerness of his flight.

They had now reached the road which turns off to Sleepy Hollow; but Gunpowder, who seemed possessed with a demon, instead of keeping up it, made an opposite turn, and plunged headlong downhill to the left. This road leads through a sandy hollow shaded by trees for about a quarter of a mile, where it crosses the bridge famous in goblin story; and just beyond swells the green knoll on which stands the whitewashed church.

As yet the panic of the steed had given his unskillful rider an apparent advantage in the chase, but just as he had got half way through the hollow, the girths of the saddle gave way, and he felt it slipping from under him. He seized it by the pommel, and endeavored to hold it firm, but in vain; and had just time to save himself by clasping old Gunpowder round the neck, when the saddle fell to the earth, and he heard it trampled under foot by his pursuer. For a moment the



terror of Hans Van Ripper's wrath passed across his mind,—for it was his Sunday saddle; but this was no time for petty fears; the goblin was hard on his haunches; and (unskilful rider that he was!) he had much ado to maintain his seat; sometimes slipping on one side, sometimes on another, and sometimes jolted on the high ridge of his horse's backbone, with a violence that he verily feared would cleave him asunder.

An opening in the trees now cheered him with the hopes that the church bridge was at hand. The wavering reflection of a silver star in the bosom of the brook told him that he was not mistaken. He saw the walls of the church dimly glaring under the trees beyond. He recollected the place where Brom Bones's ghostly competitor had disappeared. "If I can but reach that bridge," thought Ichabod, "I am safe." Just then he heard the black steed panting and blowing close behind him; he even fancied that he felt his hot breath. Another convulsive kick in the ribs, and old Gunpowder sprang upon the bridge; he thundered over the resounding planks; he gained the opposite side; and now Ichabod cast a look behind to see if his pursuer should vanish, according to rule, in a flash of fire and brimstone. Just then he saw the goblin rising in his stirrups, and in the very act of hurling his head at him. Ichabod endeavored to dodge the horrible missile, but too late. It encountered his cranium with a tremendous crash,—he was tumbled headlong into the dust, and Gunpowder,

the black steed, and the goblin rider, passed by like a whirlwind.

The next morning the old horse was found without his saddle, and with the bridle under his feet, soberly cropping the grass at his master's gate. Ichabod did not make his appearance at breakfast; dinner-hour came, but no Ichabod. The boys assembled at the schoolhouse, and strolled idly about the banks of the brook; but no schoolmaster. Hans Van Ripper now began to feel some uneasiness about the fate of poor Ichabod, and his saddle. An inquiry was set on foot, and after diligent investigation they came upon his traces. In one part of the road leading to the church was found the saddle trampled in the dirt; the tracks of horses' hoofs deeply dented in the road, and evidently at furious speed, were traced to the bridge, beyond which, on the bank of a broad part of the brook, where the water ran deep and black, was found the hat of the unfortunate Ichabod, and close beside it a shattered pumpkin.

The brook was searched, but the body of the schoolmaster was not to be discovered. Hans Van Ripper as executor of his estate, examined the bundle which contained all his worldly effects. They consisted of two shirts and a half; two stocks for the neck; a pair or two of worsted stockings; an old pair of corduroy small-clothes; a rusty razor; a book of psalm tunes full of dog's-ears; and a broken pitch-pipe. As to the books and furniture of the schoolhouse, they belonged to the community, excepting Cotton Mather's "History of Witchcraft," a

"New England Almanac," and a book of dreams and fortune-telling; in which last was a sheet of foolscap much scribbled and blotted in several fruitless attempts to make a copy of verses in honor of the heiress of Van Tassel. These magic books and the poetic scrawl were forthwith consigned to the flames by Hans Van Ripper; who, from that time forward, determined to send his children no more to school, observing that he never knew any good come of this same reading and writing. Whatever money the schoolmaster possessed, and he had received his quarter's pay but a day or two before, he must have had about his person at the time of his disappearance.

The mysterious event caused much speculation at the church on the following Sunday. Knots of gazers and gossips were collected in the churchyard, at the bridge, and at the spot where the hat and pumpkin had been found. The stories of Brouwer, of Bones, and a whole budget of others were called to mind; and when they had diligently considered them all, and compared them with the symptoms of the present case, they shook their heads, and came to the conclusion that Ichabod had been carried off by the Galloping Hessian. As he was a bachelor, and in nobody's debt, nobody troubled his head any more about him; the school was removed to a different quarter of the hollow, and another pedagogue reigned in his stead.

It is true, an old farmer, who had been down to New York on a visit several years after, and from whom this account of the ghostly adventure was received, brought

home the intelligence that Ichabod Crane was still alive; that he had left the neighborhood partly through fear of the goblin and Hans Van Ripper, and partly in mortification at having been suddenly dismissed by the heiress; that he had changed his quarters to a distant part of the country; had kept school and studied law at the same time; had been admitted to the bar; turned politician; electioneered; written for the newspapers; and finally had been made a justice of the Ten Pound Court. Brom Bones, too, who, shortly after his rival's disappearance conducted the blooming Katrina in triumph to the altar, was observed to look exceedingly knowing whenever the story of Ichabod was related, and always burst into a hearty laugh at the mention of the pumpkin; which led some to suspect that he knew more about the matter than he chose to tell.

The old country wives, however, who are the best judges of these matters, maintain to this day that Ichabod was spirited away by supernatural means; and it is a favorite story often told about the neighborhood round the winter evening fire. The bridge became more than ever an object of superstitious awe; and that may be the reason why the road has been altered of late years, so as to approach the church by the border of the millpond. The schoolhouse being deserted soon fell to decay, and was reported to be haunted by the ghost of the unfortunate pedagogue and the plowboy, loitering homeward of a still summer evening, has often fancied his voice at a distance,

chanting a melancholy psalm tune among the tranquil solitudes of Sleepy Hollow.

POSTSCRIPT.

FOUND IN THE HANDWRITING OF MR. KNICKERBOCKER.

The preceding tale is given almost in the precise words in which I heard it related at a Corporation meeting at the ancient city of Manhattoes, at which were present many of its sagest and most illustrious burghers. The narrator was a pleasant, shabby, gentlemanly old fellow, in pepper-and-salt clothes, with a sadly humourous face, and one whom I strongly suspected of being poor--he made such efforts to be entertaining. When his story was concluded, there was much laughter and approbation, particularly from two or three deputy aldermen, who had been asleep the greater part of the time. There was, however, one tall, dry-looking old gentleman, with beetling eyebrows, who maintained a grave and rather severe face throughout, now and then folding his arms, inclining his head, and looking down upon the floor, as if turning a doubt over in his mind. He was one of your wary men, who never laugh but upon good grounds--when they have reason and law on their side. When the mirth of the rest of the company had subsided, and silence was restored, he leaned one arm on the elbow of his chair, and sticking the other akimbo, demanded, with a slight, but exceedingly sage motion of the head, and contraction

of the brow, what was the moral of the story, and what it went to prove?

The story-teller, who was just putting a glass of wine to his lips, as a refreshment after his toils, paused for a moment, looked at his inquirer with an air of infinite deference, and, lowering the glass slowly to the table, observed that the story was intended most logically to prove--

"That there is no situation in life but has its advantages and pleasures--provided we will but take a joke as we find it:

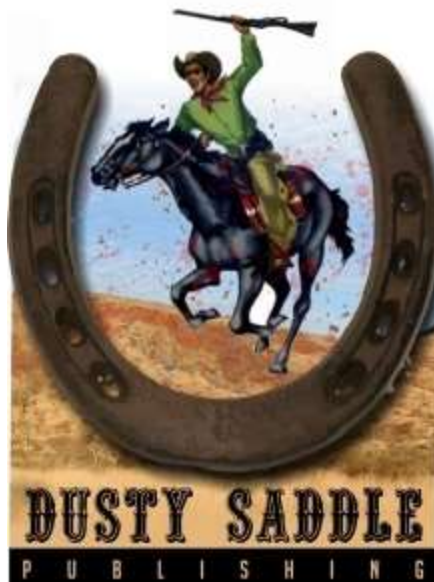
"That, therefore, he that runs races with goblin troopers is likely to have rough riding of it.

"Ergo, for a country schoolmaster to be refused the hand of a Dutch heiress is a certain step to high preferment in the state."

The cautious old gentleman knit his brows tenfold closer after this explanation, being sorely puzzled by the ratiocination of the syllogism, while, methought, the one in pepper-and-salt eyed him with something of a triumphant leer. At length he observed that all this was very well, but still he thought the story a little on the extravagant--there were one or two points on which he had his doubts.

"Faith, sir," replied the story-teller, "as to that matter, I don't believe one-half of it myself." D. K.

THE END.



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