

***Factually Documented Articles on the Wild West***

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Tiffany & Co.**

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**Well Hardly**

Our town slow?  
Well, I guess not;  
What are you a-drivin' at?  
Don't you know  
A man got shot  
For sayin' such a thing as that?

WALTER JUAN DAVIS



# Journal

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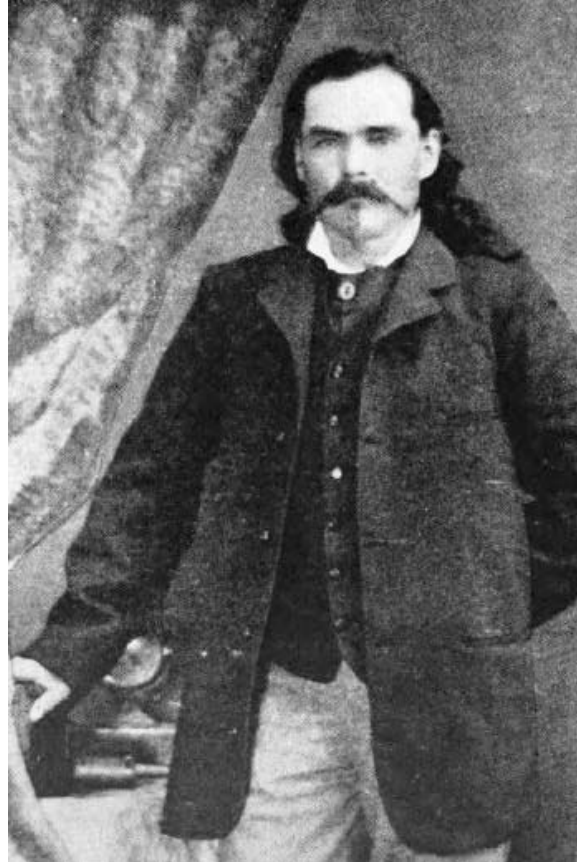
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# Trajectory of the Billy Dixon Long Shot: Second Battle of Adobe Walls

By James A. and Margaret B. Bailey



*Billy Dixon as a young man from Life and Adventures of "Billy" Dixon, of Adobe Walls, Texas Panhandle.*

**T**hree days into the Second Battle of Adobe Walls, on June 30, 1874 buffalo hunter William "Billy" Dixon made a spectacular long-range rifle shot that many firearm enthusiasts have attempted to replicate. First, some background:

Widespread hide hunting noticeably diminished buffalo herds in the territory near Dodge City, Kansas in 1872 and 1873. So hunters ventured south, where the buffalo were more plentiful. In early 1874, approximately fifty intrepid individuals and a car-

van of thirty wagons departed Dodge City destined for the Texas Panhandle.<sup>1-2</sup> Accompanied by scouts and hunters, some of the enterprising people in the caravan aimed to establish an outpost that would accommodate the hunters in Texas's expanded buffalo hunting grounds. Twenty-year-old Bat Masterson was the youngest of the adventurers and twenty-four-year-old Billy Dixon was second youngest man among them.<sup>3-5</sup> Also, one woman, Hannah Olds, accompanied her husband, William Olds, to the post.<sup>6</sup>

When the caravan was near its destination, the members of the trek came upon the ruins of William Bent's 1849 trading post. After Bent was attacked by hostile Indians, the remaining four-to-five feet tall adobe brick walls that Bent constructed in the 1840s silently stood as a monument to the earlier settlement. Less than two miles from this site, the new arrivals established another trading post on a broad valley close to what later came to be called East Adobe Walls Creek.<sup>7</sup> Near the site the Dodge City caravan chose to settle, in 1864 Colonel Christopher "Kit" Carson had fought a two-day battle against Indians numbering three thousand or more.<sup>8-9</sup>

Therefore, in view of historical events, significance of the first Adobe Walls settlement and Carson's military engagement, the 1874 trading post was named Adobe Walls. It was located slightly north of the Canadian River. The settlement included a small community of buffalo hunters, skinnners and merchants. Not all fifty of the original caravan lived at Adobe Walls; some travelled the countryside and moved their temporary camps from site to site in search of game.<sup>10</sup>

The first three structures the 1874 settlers built were made with picket frames and sod. The Myers and Leonard general merchandising store, owned by A. C. Myers and Frederick J. Leonard, was built with a picket structure. The store included a stockade corral made of large cottonwood logs. Like the Myers and Leonard store, Thomas O'Keefe built a blacksmith shop constructed with wooden framed pickets. James Hanrahan built a sod building where he operated a saloon.<sup>11-12</sup> The wooden framed buildings were covered with prairie grass sod about two feet thick and grass roots held the soil in place while the structures were under construction. There were also two picket fence enclosures in the settlement. One surrounded Tom O'Keefe's blacksmith's quarters and shop while another corralled the horses when they were not

being watered at the nearby river.<sup>13-17</sup>

While construction was underway, Dixon and three companions left the settlement to scout the area for buffalo. Their expedition lasted about fifteen days before they returned to the settlement. Upon their return, the buildings were close to finished. While they were out searching for game, Robert M. Wright and James Langton came from Dodge City and joined the settlement. They also built a sod structure, Rath and Company, which was used as a general merchandising store where they bought buffalo hides. Restless and eager to find a good hunting range with plentiful game, two days later Dixon and his companions struck out again leaving the industrious men to their work of establishing the trading post.<sup>18</sup> Within three to four days, Dixon returned from his expedition to find the structures were completed and a good bit of business taking place at Adobe Walls.



Hunters and freight outfits who came before and after the 1874 settlers made regular trips between the trading post and Dodge City. The trading post became a lively place where card playing, horse races, drinking spirits and target shooting routinely became pastimes until migrating game populated the plain.<sup>19</sup>

Once again Dixon grew restless and around the end of May 1874, he ventured out on the range. His companions, James S. "Frenchy" French and Charley Armitage, accompanied him.<sup>20</sup> About three days later, he spotted a herd of thousands of buffalo. He killed as many as "Frenchy" and Charley could skin but needed more skinnners. So he returned to Adobe Walls to hire more skinnners. As soon as the other buffalo hunters at the trading post heard the news, they eagerly departed for the hunting range. With the exception of the merchants and their clerks, the trading post was almost immediately deserted.

Dixon returned to the hunt, loaded his hides and started back to the trading post accompanied by the extra skinner he hired to help "Frenchy" and Charley. While searching along the Canadian for a safe crossing, he learned from other hunters that two hide hunters had been killed twenty-five miles downriver on Chicken Creek.<sup>21</sup>

**THE INDIANS.**

Official information says that two buffalo hunters were killed and horribly mutilated by Indians near Adobe Walls, Indian Territory, and that many small parties of Kiowas and Comanches are moving to depredate upon the settlements along the Arkansas river.

*News of Indian attacks near Adobe Walls. Boston Post, June 30, 1874.*

Before learning of the hunters' deaths, Dixon considered unhitching his wagon, leaving it by the river and coming back for it when the waters were less treacherous. But that was no longer an option. Hostile Indians would destroy the wagon. He had no choice but to cross the churning waters that had risen since his last crossing. While attempting to get to the other side, the water was so deep his two mules were forced to swim. The wagon and mules got caught in the current and tumbled in the rushing water. It was either save the mules or the wagon. Dixon chose the mules. Yet he was able to save only one of the animals. The next day they pulled the wagon from the water but all their guns, including Dixon's .50 caliber Sharps, ammunition and supplies were submerged in the Canadian and could not be recovered. Disheveled and muddy, Dixon returned to Adobe Walls.<sup>22</sup>

When the settlers at the trading post caught sight of Dixon covered in mud and leading one mule toward the settlement, they feared the worst. By this time, talk of the two hunters killed at Chicken Creek was the chief topic of conversation at the post. Having heard about the Chicken Creek killings, the denizens of Adobe Walls were

certain Dixon, too, had become a victim of the hostiles. Dixon stayed at Adobe Walls long enough to replace his lost mule with a horse and purchase another gun, a round-barrel Sharps. Three days passed and he was back at his hunting camp but before he left Adobe Walls, another hunter brought more bad news. Indians had killed two more buffalo hunters on the nearby hunting range.<sup>23</sup>

When Dixon reached his camp, he delivered news of the recent Indian attacks and the killings to his companions. They wasted no time breaking camp and made their way within a day to a nearby creek, later named Dixon Creek, but soon returned to Adobe Walls. Undeterred by news of the attacks, they made plans to restock enough supplies for a two-month stay on the buffalo range. While at Adobe Walls, Hanrahan approached Dixon with a business deal. He offered to enter into a fifty-fifty partnership with Dixon. Dixon would kill the buffalo and Hanrahan, who had an outlet for the hides, would provide the skinners. Dixon accepted the offer and set about locating a second more powerful firearm than the round-barrel Sharps he purchased days before to replace his .50 caliber Sharps lost in the river mishap.<sup>24</sup>



*The .50-90 Sharps rifle is referred to as a Big Fifty. The cartridge is a .50 caliber bullet loaded in a 2.5-inch length cartridge case and loaded with 90 grains of black powder. (Photograph by authors)*

Langton, co-owner and manager of Rath and Company Store, had the next best thing to a .50 Sharps, a ".44" Sharps. It had been promised to another hunter who was out on the range, but since he was not scheduled to return before Langton received another shipment of guns, he offered to sell the ".44" to Dixon. So Dixon bought it. Eager to show off the ".44" to Hanrahan, Dixon headed to the saloon.

That night, June 26, 1874, Dixon's gun was not the only topic of conversation. Talk of neighboring Indians killing the four buffalo hunters in the vicinity dominated much of the conversation as well. Despite the unpleasant news, Dixon and some of the hunters still planned to depart early the following day to return to the hunting range. They were willing to hunt regardless of the threat of attack from the nearby Indian tribes. Strangely enough, in spite of the recent attacks on other hide hunters, Adobe Walls residents still did not post a watch. Perhaps the number of men in the settlement gave rise to a false sense of security. After socializing with Hanrahan and the saloon patrons, Dixon left and bedded down in the open air near O'Keefe's blacksmith's shop with his ".44" close beside him between the blankets. Wagons were loaded and ready to leave the next morning, June 27, and so was Dixon.<sup>25</sup> Hunters usually left the camp about sunrise to depart on their hunting excursions and Dixon planned to be among them.

While Billy Dixon slept outside near his wagon, two men, Oscar "Shep" Shepherd, Hanrahan's bartender, and Mike Welch, one of Dixon's skinnners, slept at Hanrahan's saloon.<sup>26</sup> Sometime around 2 a.m., a loud piercing sound much like a rifle shot was heard coming from a ridge pole in the saloon. The sound woke the men who were asleep in the saloon and they woke others in the settlement. Soon the commotion awoke almost everyone in the settlement. Hastily,

everyone set about repairing the cracked timber. A collapsed roof not only could have destroyed the saloon but taken the lives of anyone inside.<sup>27-28</sup>

As dawn approached, the repairs were finally completed. After helping repair the fractured timber, Dixon went to the creek to water his horse. A Texas newspaper reporter, Maurice Crain, described Dixon's observation: "Looking toward the east he [Dixon] saw what appeared to be an army of Indians, with fluttering war bonnets and mounted on galloping horses, silhouetted against the flaming sunrise."<sup>29-30</sup> Dixon fired at the approaching Indians as he rushed back to Adobe Walls to warn of the attack.



The rise in hostility toward the hide hunters had been evidenced in the earlier killing of the four buffalo hunters, but the sight Dixon witnessed on the morning of June 27 was an imminent threat to all the Adobe Walls settlers. By the spring of 1874, the chiefs from the Kiowa, Cheyenne and Comanche tribes formed an alliance and planned attacks on frontier settlers in an attempt to discourage hide hunters from further reducing the buffalo herds which the Indians depended on for their survival. Reports of massacres in New Mexico, Colorado, Oklahoma, Northern Texas and western Kansas were becoming more commonplace. And the second Adobe Walls settlement was not to be an exception.<sup>31</sup>

When Indians made their first attack on the Adobe Walls settlement, twenty-eight men and one woman, Hannah Olds, were present. Of the men, only eight or nine actually lived at the settlement. The other twenty or so were buffalo hunters who intermittently came for supplies or stopped at the trading post on their way to the hunting grounds.<sup>32-33</sup> Twenty-five of the twenty-nine survived the attack.<sup>34-39</sup>

Dixon estimated the settlement was attacked by approximately 700 to 1,000 warriors lead by Comanche Chief Quanah Parker.<sup>40-41</sup> Others reported an unknown number of Indians mounted the attack whereas some believed there were as many as three thousand warriors.<sup>42-43</sup>

During the siege, Shepherd was firing Hanrahan's ".50" Sharps but in Dixon's opinion, Shepherd's excited state prevented him from handling the rifle very effectively. Since Hanrahan did not have a firearm, Dixon handed Hanrahan his ".44." Then Dixon asked Shepherd to give him the ".50." Gladly, Shepherd turned the large bore buffalo rifle over to Dixon.<sup>44</sup>



*Quanah Parker, Comanche Indian Chief.  
(Library of Congress, National Photo Company  
Collection, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-  
USZ62-98166.)*

Individuals' recollections and newspapers present different accounts of the 1874 attack. However, according to one report, during the third day, Bat Masterson noticed a group of Indians approximately three

quarters of a mile away on a butte. Masterson said, "Billy, it wouldn't be a bad idea to break up that little pow-wow over there, would it?"<sup>45</sup>

Masterson's remark has been credited by some with prompting Dixon to fire the long shot using Hanrahan's .50-90 Sharps rifle.<sup>46-47</sup> It was reported Dixon responded to Masterson, "Don't know whether the old Sharps is good for it or not, but I'll try it." Dixon estimated the range to be approximately 1200 yards and adjusted the sights on the rifle for that distance and fired.<sup>48</sup> On the butte in the distance an Indian warrior "fell" victim to Dixon's long shot.

Later, Dixon gave his version of the momentous shot: "I took careful aim and pulled the trigger. We saw an Indian fall from his horse. The others dashed out of sight behind a clump of timber. A few moments later two Indians ran quickly on foot to where the dead Indian lay, seized his body and scurried for cover. They had risked their lives, as we had frequently observed, to rescue a companion who might be not only wounded but dead. I was admittedly a good marksman, yet this was what might be called a scratch [lucky] shot."<sup>49</sup>

Dixon fired a .50-90 Sharps rifle, also referred to as a "Big Fifty" to defend against the attack. According to Hanrahan, six other frontiersmen were also firing "Big Fifties." However, Dixon made the miraculous shot.<sup>50</sup>



*Bob Butterfield demonstrating a .44 Sharps rifle  
at Adobe Walls during the 2015 Wild West  
History Association (WWHA) Roundup  
(Photograph by authors)*

Other than the caliber, the exact specifications for the rifle Dixon fired are unknown. Unlike other manufactured rifles, the Sharps rifle could be ordered in a variety of barrel lengths and weights. Barrel profiles were manufactured round, half-round, octagon or half-octagon. The rifles were chambered for different calibers, different sights, butt plate shapes plus optional double set triggers.<sup>51</sup> These options explain why there are so many variations in the 1874 Sharps. It was a rifle that could be customized at the factory for any individual who placed an order.



*Tangent peep sight with vernier adjustments for elevation and windage. (Photograph by authors)*

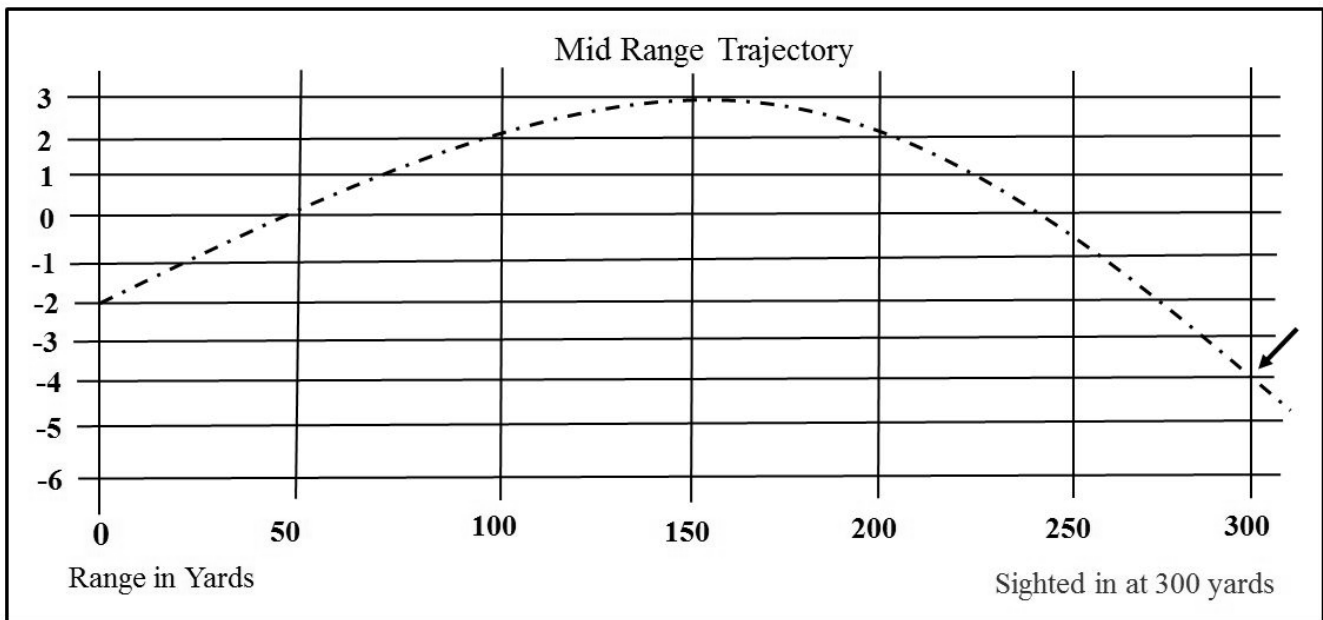
Tangent sights were essential for buffalo hunters to make long-distance shots. Therefore, the firearms used at Adobe Walls most likely had that kind of sight. The tan-

gent peep sight consisted of an eye cup with a small orifice for sighting; the globe front sight allowed the shooter to insert posts, circles or other front sight designs. To account for elevation and windage, the Sharps sight was calibrated in fractional parts of an inch. A dial at the top of the sight allowed the shooter to move the sight up or down in order to adjust for elevation.<sup>52</sup>

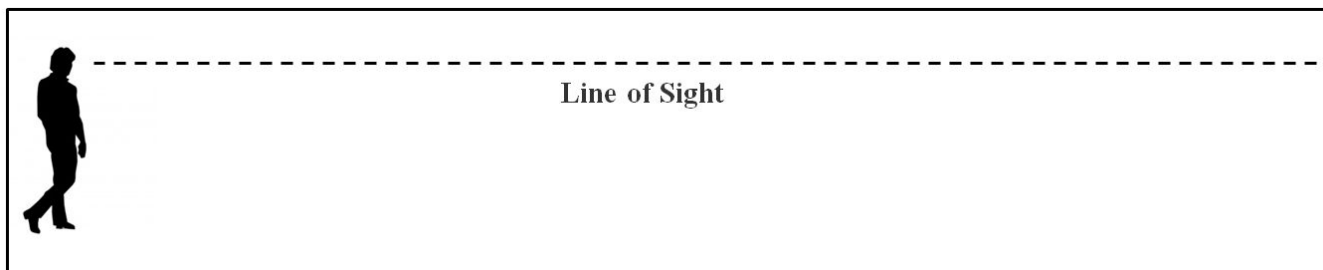
The sight adjustment screw was 1/8 inch in diameter with a 20-pitch tread. The thread diameter and pitch created a Vernier scale.<sup>53</sup> These specifications allowed a shooter to make minor or major adjustments. For instance, one complete turn of the screw represented a change of 1/20 inch, a half turn 1/40 inch and an eighth turn, 1/80 inch. A change in the barrel's elevation changed the trajectory of the bullet. An 1875 Sharps catalog used the following example to explain sight adjustments for a .44-90-500. A rifle zeroed in at 100 yards, required a 1/4 inch adjustment for a target at 300 yards, 0.57 inches for 500 yards, 1.1 inches for 800 yards, 1.51 inches for 1000 yards and 1.73 inches for 1100 yards. These sight adjustments would also have been representative of a .50-90 Sharps rifle with the same outcome on the bullet's trajectory.<sup>54-55</sup>

The chart below illustrates the trajectory or path a bullet takes after exiting the muzzle of a firearm until impact with a target. As shown, the bullet's path forms a parabola. If a rifle is sighted in at 300 yards, the bullet travels three inches higher than the line of sight to the target. Then at mid-range trajectory, it travels downward to the target. The bullet drop from mid-range trajectory to the target is seven inches as shown in the chart. Therefore, if the target is one-hundred and fifty yards from the shooter, with no sight adjustment, the bullet would strike three inches high on the target.



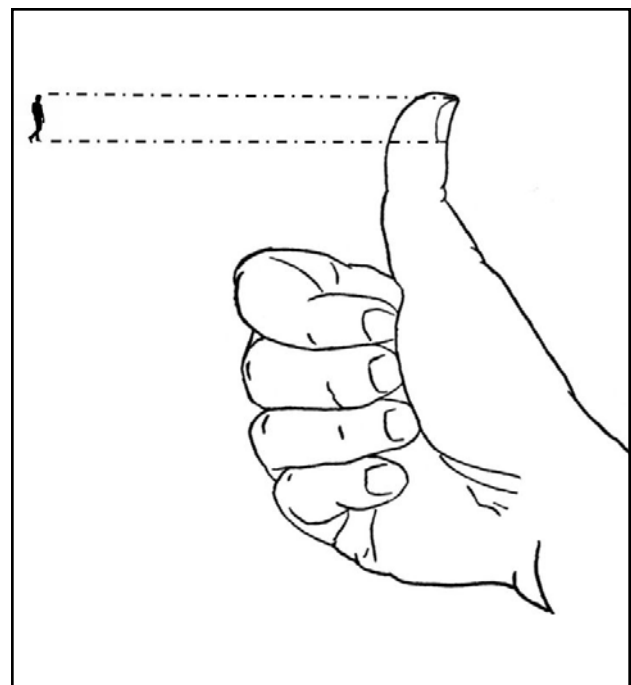


*Bullet trajectory with rifle sighted in at 300 yards. (Diagram by authors)*



*Front and rear rifle sight alignment presents shooter with line of sight (Diagram by authors)*

In addition to trajectory, estimating the distance to the target is an important aspect of making a long-range shot. Estimating distance to the target dates back to the flintlock shooting era. A shooter estimated the distance to the target by extending his arm and comparing the height of his thumbnail to the height of the perceived target.<sup>56</sup> The size of an adult image at 100 yards is the same approximate height as the extended thumbnail. The size of an adult image at 7/8 of a mile is only a fraction of the thumbnail's height. Dixon was an experienced buffalo hunter which provided him with the knowledge and skill to adjust the sights on the rifle. Even though the warrior's image was small, he was silhouetted against the morning sky which gave Dixon a sight picture so he was able to align the sights on the rifle.



*Estimating distance to the target (Diagram by authors)*

Several different estimates for the distance Dixon shot as well as his location in the settlement when he made the shot have been reported. One article specified that Dixon fired from the saloon door.<sup>57</sup> Whether he fired from the saloon door or some other position in the settlement is of little consequence considering the distance of the shot. The distance often reported is 1,538 yards. This is generally accepted as the distance of the shot because two weeks after the battle, a team of U.S. Army surveyors traveled to Adobe Walls and measured the distance from the settlement to the nearby butte where the warrior stood that Dixon shot.<sup>58</sup>

In addition to estimating distance, marksmanship ability was acquired by using proven shooting techniques and practices. At the time, marksmanship was included in military training which involved estimating distances. To accomplish this, men were placed at specific distances so soldiers could associate image size for a specific distance.<sup>59</sup> Military leaders realized the importance of this training:

"Amongst those who have had experience in training men to estimate distances, it is commonly recognized that whilst the first attempts are ludicrously wide of the mark, a very little practice produces considerable improvement, so that in a short time the power of estimation is brought within reach of the accuracy of the rifle."<sup>60</sup>

As a buffalo hunter, Dixon was a master

of shooting technique, an essential in the skill of marksmanship. Furthermore, he demonstrated skillfulness in other aspects of shooting technique including: shooting position, grip of the weapon, sight picture, sight alignment, breathing technique and trigger pull. The impact of each of these techniques is described below.

In regard to position, a kneeling or sitting position with the rifle supported by a forked branch or stationary object is more accurate than shooting while standing with the firearm unsupported. If the shooter grasps the firearm too tightly, exertion of the muscles will introduce unsteadiness while aiming at a target. Also, attention must be focused on the sight picture and alignment. The sight picture is the placement of the front and rear sight on a specific part of the target while sight alignment is the correct alignment of the front and rear sight. In addition, breathing rate must be considered. The correct breathing technique is important while finding the correct sight picture and aligning the sights; once the sight picture is in alignment, the shooter should exhale, then inhale a half breath, hold it and take the shot. Lastly, trigger pull. The shooter should steadily increase uniform pressure on the trigger until the rifle fires. Dixon not only mastered excellent shooting technique but also obviously had some knowledge of ballistics.



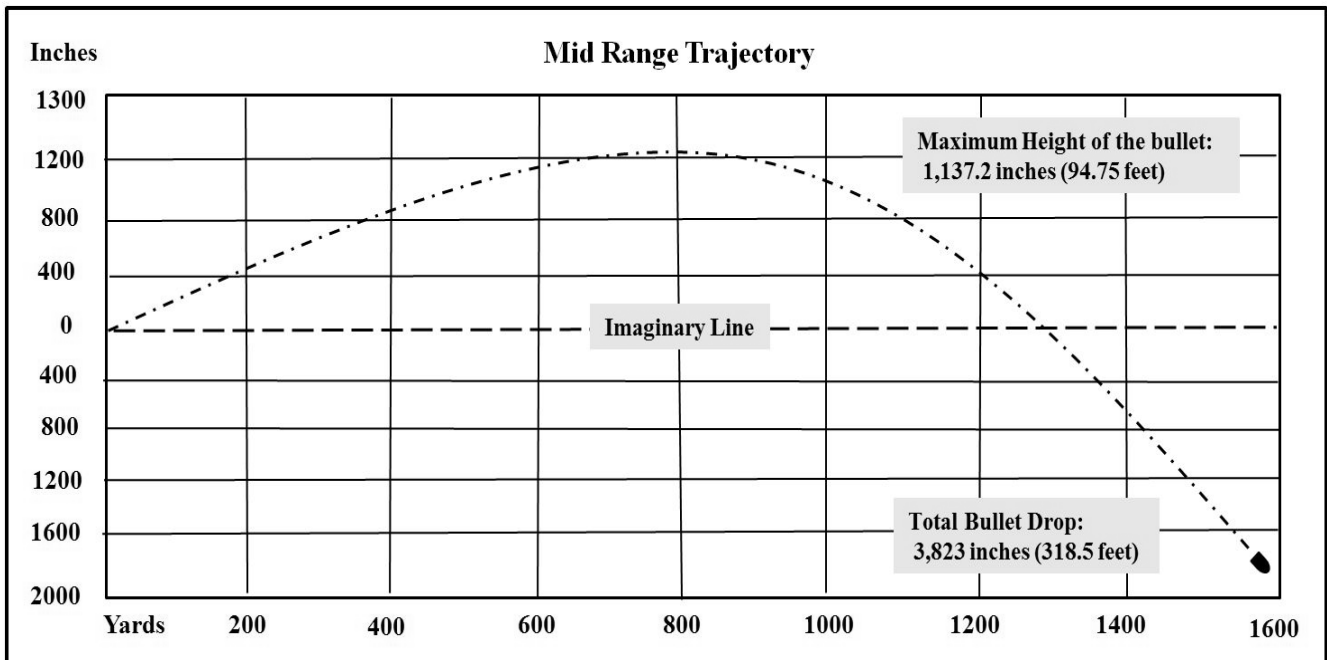
*Billy Dixon long shot reenactment at Adobe Walls during the WWHA Roundup. On the butte, the arrow indicates WWHA reenactors, Jason Ramirez on the left and Henry B. Crawford on the right. A 70 mm focal-length camera lens produced the approximate object-to-image size ratio viewed by observers. (Photograph by authors)*

Ballistics is the study of projectiles in motion and trajectory is an aspect of ballistics. Although understanding the fundamentals of bullet trajectory may be practical, it does not have to be theoretical. Dixon could not have made the shot without considering some of the major factors affecting bullet trajectory and ballistics.

Moreover, a shooter would need to have practical knowledge of numerous variables which affect the trajectory of a bullet as well as ballistics. For example, factory specifications for a specific Sharps rifle include: barrel length, number of lands and grooves, width of lands, width of grooves and rate of twist. The rifle and ammunition specifications are also part of the formula for repeatability of accurately fired shots. Consequently, Dixon with his experience as a hunter was able to accurately make these adjustments. Other factors that affect a bullet's trajectory include: gravity, drag, elevation, temperature and if present, wind on the bullet's trajectory. Whether Dixon had knowledge of these is unknown.

A variable which Dixon most likely would not have considered even though it had an effect on the trajectory of the bullet when it exited the muzzle of the rifle was gravitational pull of the earth. Unknowingly to him, the gaseous make-up of the air created drag as the bullet traveled along its trajectory. Lastly, the air temperature and presence or lack of wind similarly had an effect on Dixon's bullet trajectory.<sup>61</sup>

Forensic science professor John I. Thornton, University of California, Berkley and Graduate Student Jill M. Shirokawa used the TRAG1P computer program in 1989 to analyze the trajectory of the shot.<sup>62-63</sup> Thornton and Shirokawa calculated the trajectory based on Dixon using a 465 grain bullet with a muzzle velocity of 1,320 feet per second at a distance of 1,538 yards. The results were remarkable. The time of flight for the bullet from the time Dixon pulled the trigger was 4.838 seconds. The muzzle flash from the shot would have been visible from the butte before the bullet reached the location.



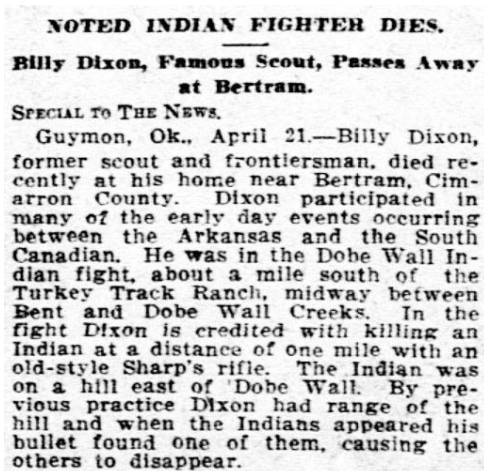
Trajectory of Billy Dixon's long shot. (Diagram by authors)

Furthermore, Dixon had to adjust his sights for the distance of the target. The maximum height of the bullet traveling from the settlement to the butte was 1,137.2 inches (94.75 feet). Not only did Dixon have to adjust his sights for elevation but the average crosswind for that time of the year was estimated to be 14.3 miles per hour. This required Dixon to adjust his sights so his aim was 337 inches (28.1 feet) in the direction of the wind. The total amount of bullet drop was 3,823 inches (318.5 feet). After being fired from that distance, the bullet travelled 781 feet per second and had 630 foot pounds of energy.<sup>64</sup> This was sufficient energy to cause serious injury or death.<sup>65-67</sup>

Two legends account for the history of the .50-90 Sharps rifle after Dixon's long shot.

According to one story, the rifle was sold to a customer who ironically was killed by Indians. Afterward, the rifle disappeared. Another account described the rifle as being lost from a ship on the West Coast of the United States. During baggage loading and unloading from the ship, the rifle was misplaced never to be seen again.<sup>68</sup>

What was the significance of Billy Dixon's single shot on June 30, 1874? One reporter noted, "The remarkable accuracy of Billy Dixon on that day broke the spirit of the attacking aborigines and, in all probability, saved the lives of the little band of buffalo hunters. Medicine men assured the warring Indians that they were immune from the white men's bullets but Dixon's marksmanship shattered that illusion."<sup>69-70</sup>



*Billy Dixon obituary, Dallas Morning News, April 22, 1913.*



*Dixon's grave marker at Adobe Walls. (Photograph by authors)*

William "Billy" Dixon lived thirty-nine years after the Indian attack on the second Adobe Walls settlement. Of the many tributes to his fame, Dixon is most often remembered for his remarkable long shot with a Sharps Big Fifty. Subsequent to the attack in 1874, Dixon continued hunting buffalo and honorably served as a civilian scout for the United States Army for several years. In fact, U. S. Army Major Nelson A. Miles presented him with the Medal of Honor for bravery during the September 12, 1874 Buffalo Wallow Indian Fight. However, in 1917, the medal was revoked by Congress but reinstated in 1989.<sup>71</sup> Dixon's medal is currently displayed at the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum in Canyon, Texas. In 1883, he filed claim on two sections of land on Bent Creek and built a house at the original Adobe Walls site, which is in Hutchinson County, Texas. There, he planned to spend the remainder of his life.

Appointed as the first postmaster at Adobe Walls, he held that position for nearly twenty years. Dixon also served as Hutchinson County's first sheriff and was appointed as justice of the peace. Additionally, he was a state land commissioner. On October 18, 1894, he married Olive King, a school teacher from Virginia. Dixon and his wife made their home at Adobe Walls until 1902 when he relocated his family to Plemons, Texas, now a ghost town, located ten miles southeast of Stinnett, Texas. Living in the confines of a town made him restless so in 1906 he homesteaded in Beaver County, Oklahoma close in proximity to Buffalo Springs near the northern border of the Texas Panhandle. Complications from pneumonia resulted in Dixon's death on March 9, 1913. He was sixty-two. Dixon was buried in Texline, Texas but his remains were relocated and reinterred at Adobe Walls in 1929.<sup>72-73</sup>

### Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank Doug Wicklund, Senior Curator at NRA National Firearms Museum, Fairfax, Virginia and staff for their assistance and information regarding the Sharps .50-90 rifle.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Billy Dixon and Frederick Samuel Barde, Compiler, *Life and Adventures of "Billy" Dixon, of Adobe Walls, Texas Panhandle* (Guthrie, Oklahoma: Mrs. Olive Dixon, 1914) pp. 150.

<sup>2</sup> Gard, op. cit.

<sup>3</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>4</sup> Authors Note: According to Wayne Gard, "Adventurous Life on Texas Frontier," 18 March 1956, *Dallas Morning News* (Dallas, Texas), p. 16, Dixon was born in West Virginia on September 25, 1850. Dixon's mother died when he was 10 years old and his father died two years later. Dixon was taken in by an uncle in Missouri and at the age of 14, he took a job as driver of a bull train for \$50 a month. Dixon continued this type of work until 1869 when he became a trapper and buffalo hunter.

<sup>5</sup> Author's Note: "Widow of Fighter Writes of Deeds Tells of Husband's Prowess as Indian Battler and Government Scout," 12 June 1914, *Plain Dealer* (Cleveland, Ohio), p. 7, Dixon received the medal of honor as a scout for Colonel Nelson Miles at the Buffalo Wallow fight during the Red River War for his heroic conduct.

<sup>6</sup> Wayne Gard, "Project to Restore Adobe Walls Post," *Dallas Morning News* (Dallas, Texas) 22 March 1955, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit., pp. 174-176.

<sup>8</sup> Gard, op. cit.

<sup>9</sup> Gard, op. cit. Carson's command included approximately four hundred men comprised of cavalry, infantry, Ute and Jicarilla Apache scouts but he knew he lacked enough force to risk his men's lives so he gave the order to retreat and returned to New Mexico.

<sup>10</sup> *The Wichita Beacon Sun* (Wichita, Kansas) 14 January 1923, p. 8.

<sup>11</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit., pp. 176-178.

<sup>12</sup> Gard, "Project to Restore Adobe Walls Post," op. cit.

<sup>13</sup> Wayne Gard, "Name a Misnomer," *Dallas Morning News* (Dallas, Texas) 3 July 1956, p. 21.

<sup>14</sup> Gard, "Project to Restore Adobe Walls Post," op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> Author's Note: C. C. Bishop, in "Quanah Parker Led Braves in Adobe Walls Siege Texas Last Indian Fight", *The Wellington Leader* (Wellington, Texas), 4 January 1934, p. 9 reported the blacksmith shop was in an old chapel.

<sup>16</sup> E. A. Brininstool, "Historic Battle Between White and Indians Will Commemorate Monument Marking Scene of Fight in Texas Panhandle Where Buffalo Hunters Stood Off Horde of Red Will be Dedicated after 50 Years," *Oakland Tribune* (Oakland, California) 30 March 1924, p. 10.

<sup>17</sup> Pauline Robertson and R. L. Robertson, "Panhandle Pilgrimage: Second Battle of Adobe Walls," *The Canyon News* (Canyon, Texas), 23 Jun 1974, pp. 4 and 10.

<sup>18</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit., pp. 177-181.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> T. Lindsay Baker and Billy R. Harrison, *Adobe Walls: The History and Archeology of the 1874 Trading Post* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1986) p. 78.

<sup>21</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit., pp. 182-185.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit., pp. 51, 186-198, 200-201.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit., pp. 201.

<sup>27</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit., pp. 203-204.

<sup>28</sup> "Billy Dixon, Scout: One of the Famous Indian Fighters of the Frontier," *Tacoma Daily News* (Tacoma, Washington) 27 April 1895, p. 3.

<sup>29</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit., pp. 203-204.

<sup>30</sup> Maurice Crain, "Bloody Battle of Adobe Walls Recalled by Anniversary Meet," *The Eagle* (Bryan, Texas) 4 July 1923 p. 3.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit., pp. 200-207.

<sup>33</sup> Baker and Harrison, op. cit., pp. 75-97, 316.

<sup>34</sup> Authors' Note: Billy Dixon and Frederick Samuel Barde, *Compiler, Life and Adventures of "Billy" Dixon, of Adobe Walls, Texas Panhandle*. (Guthrie, Oklahoma: Mrs. Olive Dixon, 1914) pp. 207. The settlers present at the Second Battle of Adobe Walls included: Charley Armitage, a skinner, Dixon referred to Charley as Harry; "Dutch Henry" Borne [Bourne], a skinner and Dixon companion. In T. Lindsay Baker and Billy R. Harrison. *Adobe Walls: The History and Archeology of the 1874 Trading Post*. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1986) pp. 68-69, 76-96.) Dutch Henry is credited with shooting the black bugler while others say Charley Armitage was the shooter.

<sup>35</sup> Authors' Note: T. Lindsay Baker and Billy R. Harrison, *Adobe Walls: The History and Archeology of the 1874 Trading Post*. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1986) pp. 76-77, 102. Frank Brown claimed he was not present during the fight but the monument at the site lists him as one of the defenders. Brown stepped in and a clash between Brown, Masterson and their associates was triggered when Olds' wife requested that her husband's gun (which Hanrahan had given to Masterson during the fight) be returned to her; James Campbell, cited as being given Tyler's gun after Tyler was shot; "Bermuda" Carlisle [Carlyle], one of the first to venture out to collect Indian relics after the fight ended; some sources suggest he was killed November 1880 when a posse tried to arrest Billy the Kid.

<sup>36</sup> Authors' Note: "Salt Lakers Chief Figures in Thrilling Narrative of Plains," *The Salt Lake Herald* (Salt Lake City, Utah), 6 January 1908, p. 3. William "Billy" Dixon, scout and buffalo hunter; George Eddy [Eby, Ebey, Enby, and Ebs], bookkeeper, Rath & Company Store, shot in the hand one Indian who reached through a hole in the wall; James S. "Frenchy" French, Dixon's cook, Fred Leonard remembered "Frenchy" being "Frenchy" Bernard, a tramp from Dodge City, Leonard also said "Frenchy" didn't arrive until the fourth day following the fight but Dixon said "Frenchy" was present from beginning to end; James "Jim" Hanrahan saloon operator, entered into partnership with Dixon day before Indian attack.

<sup>37</sup> Authors' Note: Olive K. Dixon, "Widow of Buffalo Hunter Tells Story of Historic Panhandle Indian Battle," *El Paso Herald* (El Paso, Texas) 24 October 1929 p. 46. Andy Johnson, buffalo hide overseer, Rath & Company Store, was primary builder of Rath & Company Store and constructed other Adobe Walls buildings; Old Man Keeler, Fred Leonard's cook for Myers & Leonard Store, some reported Keeler was William "Billy" Keeler; James Langton [Longton, Langdon], manager, Rath & Company Store, joined the settlement end of May 1874; the July 18, 1923 edition of the *Dunkirk Evening Observer* (Dunkirk, New York) reported details of the attack and Henry J. Lease's ride to Dodge City for reinforcements, the buffalo hunter was at Adobe Walls to purchase supplies when the attack occurred; he rode horseback to Dodge City the second day of the attack seeking reinforcements. Lease was a friend of Lucien Maxwell's son, Pedro "Pete" Maxwell. Sheriff Patrick Garrett shot and killed Billy the Kid in Pete Maxwell's room July 14, 1881.

<sup>38</sup> Authors' Note: "Salt Lakers Chief Figures in Thrilling Narrative of Plains," *The Salt Lake Herald* (Salt Lake City, Utah), 6 January 1908, p. 3. Fred Leonard, proprietor and partner with Charlie Myers, Myers & Leonard's Store, sleeping inside Myers & Leonard's horse corral when attack occurred; William Barclay "Bat" Masterson also sleeping inside Myers & Leonard's horse corral; Mike "Cranky" "Fighting" McCabe, was sleeping inside Myers & Leonard's horse corral; James McKinley; James Thomas O'Keefe, blacksmith; Billy Ogg, cook; Hannah Olds, also a cook and employed by Charles Rath, Robert Wright and James Langton, owners of the Rath Company Store, was the only woman in the settlement. Hannah witnessed her husband's fall and death; William Olds, clerk, Rath & Company Store; Olds accidentally shot himself with a rifle while on a ladder the fifth day of the siege.

<sup>39</sup> Authors' Note: "Where 28 Kansans Repulsed 1,000 Savage Indians," *The Hutchinson News*, (Hutchinson, Kansas) 9 January 1923, p.9.) The Adobe Walls memorial marker, other newspaper articles and *Life and Adventures of "Billy" Dixon, of Adobe Walls, Texas Panhandle*, list the spelling of the surname of the two brothers killed as Ike and "Shorty" Shadler. The brothers were sleeping in Ike's wagon which was about ten feet from Myers & Leonard's stockade when the Indians attacked and killed them. Brothers Ike and "Shorty" Shadler are presented as Scheidler in T. Lindsay Baker and Billy R. Harrison's book, *Adobe Walls: The History and Archeology of the 1874 Trading Post*. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1986) p. 61; Oscar "Shep" Shepherd, Dixon's skin ner and companions; Sam Smith, was sleeping outside; Edward Trevor; Billy Tyler, Indians shot Tyler through the lungs early in the attack and he died shortly afterward; Hiram Watson. Watson Clark is listed among settlers in a January 6 1908 *Salt Lake Herald* article; however, other publications list Hiram Watson. Mike Welch slept in the saloon and heard the beam crack.

<sup>40</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit., p. 208.

<sup>41</sup> "Adobe Walls Fight Will Be Observed," *Dallas Morning News* (Dallas, Texas), 11 June 1923, p. 3.

<sup>42</sup> "Texas Boy Scouts Honor Billy Dixon," *The Bonham Daily Favorite* (Bonham, Texas) 20 May 1929, p. 5.

<sup>43</sup> J. W. Powell, "Seventeenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology," Government Printing Office (Washington, D.C.) 1898, p. 203.

<sup>44</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit., pp. 214.

<sup>45</sup> Elmo Scott Watson, "The Long Shot Made by Billy Dixon," *Manitowoc Herald-Times* (Manitowoc, Wisconsin) 16 September 1921, p. 8.

<sup>46</sup> James A. Crutchfield, *It Happened in Texas*, 2nd edition, Morris Book Publishing, Helena, Montana, 2008, pp. 67-68.

<sup>47</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit., p. 233.

<sup>48</sup> Watson, op. cit.

<sup>49</sup> Crutchfield, op. cit.

<sup>50</sup> "Salt Lakers Chief Figures in Thrilling Narrative of Plains," *The Salt Lake Herald* (Salt Lake City, Utah), 6 Jan 1908 p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> Lee A. Silva, "Sharps Called its Model 1874 'Old Reliable,' and the Popular Rifle Lived Up to its Name," *Wild West* December 2014, vol. 27 Issue 4 pp. 70-71.

<sup>52</sup> Edward Samuel Farrow, *Farrow's Military Encyclopedia: A Dictionary of Military Knowledge*, 2nd edition, Vol. 2, (New York: Military-Navy Publishing Company, 1895) p. 499-500.

<sup>53</sup> Authors' Note: A Vernier scale indicates decimal or fractional subdivisions between main marks on a scale. Verniers permit more accurate measurements between main divisions and are common indicators on scientific and machinist equipment. The name is derived from the French mathematician Pierre Vernier.

<sup>54</sup> David F. Butler, *United States Firearms: The First Century 1776-1875*, (New York: Winchester Press, 1971) pp. 170-172.

<sup>55</sup> Authors' Note: The Vernier scale on Remington rifle sights were calibrated into degrees and minutes while Sharps rifle sights were calibrated in fractional parts of an inch. Sharps rifles were a series of large bore single-shot firearms designed by Christian Sharps. The rifles were in production from 1848 to 1881.

<sup>56</sup> John L. Plaster, *History of Sniping and Sharpshooting*, (Boulder, Colorado: Paladin Press, 2008) pp. 254-263.

<sup>57</sup> J. W. Baker, "Central Texas History Questions and Answers," *The Hearne Democrat* (Hearne, Texas), 9 March 1972, p. 2.

<sup>58</sup> Plaster, op. cit., 258-263.

<sup>59</sup> W. P. Evans, editor. *Journal of the United States Infantry Association*, Vol. 2, No. 2, (Washington, D.C.: United States Infantry Association, 1905) pp. 164-165.

<sup>60</sup> *Rifle Shooting at Unknown Distances, Arms & Explosives: A Technical and Trade Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 192, (London: Effingham House, 1908) pp. 113-114.

<sup>61</sup> Author's Note: The percentage of gases change at different elevations. At sea level, there is ~78% nitrogen and ~21% oxygen with traces of water vapor, carbon dioxide and various other particles. A U.S. Geological Survey topographical map indicates that the elevation of Adobe Walls is 2,685 feet above sea level.

<sup>62</sup> John I. Thornton and Jill M. Shirokawa, "A Trajectory Analysis of the Billy Dixon's Long Shot," *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, Vol. 34, No. 4, July 1989, pp. 1037-1041).

<sup>63</sup> Authors' Note: The TRAGIP computer program was developed by Tioga Engineering Company, Wellsboro, Pennsylvania.

<sup>64</sup> Author's Note: The foot-pound is a unit of work or energy. A force adequate to lift one pound a distance of one foot is a foot-pound.

<sup>65</sup> P. K. Stefanopoulos, K. Filippakis, O.T. Soupiou, V.C. Pazarakiotis, *Wound Ballistics of Firearm-related Injuries - Part 1: "Missile Characteristics and Mechanisms of Soft Tissue Wounding," International Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*, Volume 43, Issue 12, December 2014, pp. 1445-1458.

<sup>66</sup> Panagiotis K. Stefanopoulos, Georgios F. Hadjigeorgiou, Konstantinos Filippakis, and Dimitrios Gyftokostas, "Gunshot Wounds: A Review of Ballistics Related to Penetrating Trauma," *Journal of Acute Disease*, Volume 3, Issue 3, 2014, pp. 178-185.

<sup>67</sup> Author's Note: Thornton and Shirokawa used a bullet coefficient of 0.523 for Dixon's bullet in their ballistics calculations. The ballistics coefficient was derived from Julian S. Hatcher, *Hatcher's Notebook*, 3rd edition, Stackpole, Harrisburg, PA, 1966, pg. 574.

<sup>68</sup> Author's Note: Doug Wicklund, National Rifle Association, National Firearms Museum, Fairfax, Virginia, Correspondence, 23 June 2015.

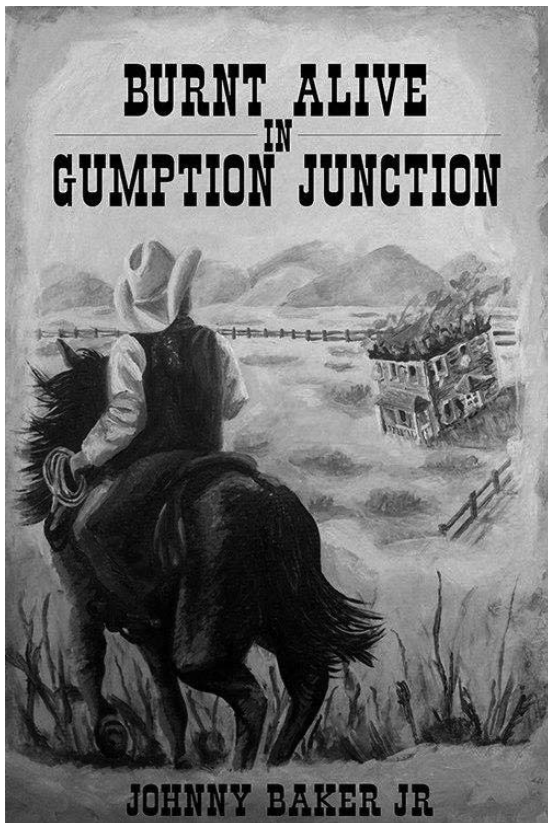
<sup>69</sup> "Impressive Ceremonies to Mark Removal Billy Dixon's Body to Site Noted Event," *Corsicana Semi-Weekly Light* (Corsicana, Texas) · 28 June 1929. p. 2.

<sup>70</sup> "Recalls Adobe Walls Battle: Fiftieth Anniversary of Historic Contest Next Year, Held 700 Indians at Bay," *The Daily Independent* (Murphysboro, Illinois) 18 July 1923, p. 5.

<sup>71</sup> William "Billy" Dixon, "Military Times Hall of Valor," <http://valor.militarytimes.com/recipient.php?recipientid=3207> 14 August 2015 Accessed.

<sup>72</sup> Dixon and Barde, op. cit. pp. 9, 301-309.

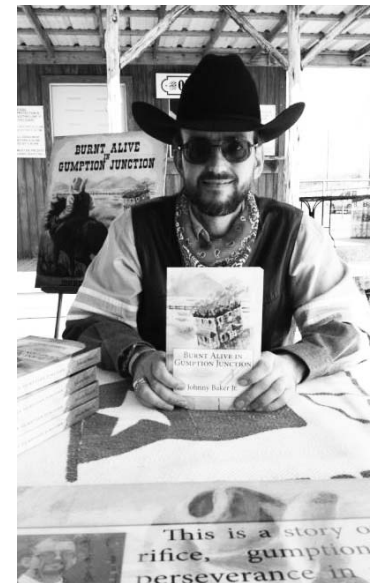
<sup>73</sup> Authors' Note: Richard E. McNalty, a cattle herder from Colorado, established Turkey Track Ranch in 1878 in the Texas Panhandle. The ranch included the site of the Second Adobe Walls Battle. Following McNalty, the property changed ownership several times. By 1916 William Thomas Coble owned Turkey Track Ranch. In 1924 he deeded five acres of land encompassing the second Adobe Walls settlement site to the Panhandle Plains Historical Society in Canyon, Texas for permanent preservation. Coble's daughter, Catherine Elizabeth Coble, married adjacent property owner James A. "Jim" Whittenberg, II in 1928. Coble-Whittenberg descendants: Dewie, Kim, Ashley, Michaela, Collin, Carson McTee and their friend Fred Labatt were present at a special program conducted by the 2015 Wild West History Association at the historic Second Battle of Adobe Walls. The WWHA recognized the Coble-Whittenberg descendants who currently own the Turkey Track Ranch for their family's long-standing Adobe Walls preservation efforts. Also, John Carson, historical interpreter and great grandson of Kit Carson was among the slate of distinguished speakers at the event.



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Johnny Baker Jr. is a writer from Dallas, TX. Earning degrees in English and History from Dallas Baptist University, he has read and studied Texas History since childhood and in the past has taught history in local community colleges.

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