



Lawmen of the Old West Unmasked: Heroes, Scoundrels, & The Famous Fighting Pimp

Jesse Wolf Hardin

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Historian Author Jesse Hardin gives us a detailed look at the complex lives of 11 of the most fascinating Sheriffs and Marshals of the historic American West – the good, the bad, and the conflicted. Find a spot by the fire, for a lyrical journey into lesser known history, unmasking the popular hero Wyatt Earp as the con-artist and pimp he really was, demonstrably courageous but a total scoundrel... and by singing the praises of the truly honorable and heroic “men behind the badge” whose deeds so often go unsung: Elfego Baca, Wyatt Earp, Harry Morse, Bucky O’Neill, John Joshua Webb, Wild Bill Hickok, Pat Garrett, Burton Mossman, George Scarborough, Bat Masterson, and Bear River Tom Smith Books and movies have long painted the West in a certain way, with a black and white version of history, wholly good guys versus the purely evil. Only trouble is, “it didn’t happen thataway, hoss!” From Hardin’s Preface: “Lawmen, even the most amazingly brave of them, embody a mix of compassion and prejudice, generosity and avarice. None are the complete good guy heroes that we once read comic books about or idolized on the silver screen. Nor were even the worst of them likely to be totally bad as some revisionists insist. Like all humans, they sometimes did things they shouldn’t have, while other times gambling with their safety in order to save a stranger’s life. It’s only once we cease the lionizing and demonizing – the cynical sniping and blind worshipping – that we can look again at these fascinating personas from the 19th and 20th Centuries for the incredibly complex individuals they were, people with common human traits and troubles doing extraordinary and occasionally incredible things with an undeniable intensity of character.” This realistic approach doesn’t rob us of heroes, what it does is help show us whose actions were truly admirable, and helps us define for ourselves the standards of just action and a life worthy of emulation. Hardin’s stories not only take us back to the days of old but give us thought about how we live our own lives, and the future we want to create and protect. As he writes: “I hope that it serves to not only inform you about times and deeds past, but also to inspire you in the now – kickstarting your imagination and putting your ideas to the test, getting you up and off of your chairs and outside where you can act out your own valued missions, and attempt the heroic. And maybe affirming your decision to keep an old shotgun in the closet or under the bed, since opposing injustice and doing good is the job of every citizen even in a land with a zillion rules and laws... whether we work in law enforcement or take pride in being social outlaws.” “Hardin’s ability to draw the reader’s mind into deeper contemplation is one of the hallmarks of a great historical work.” –Boge Quinn, GunBlast.com Hardin finds that both the best and worst of the old time lawmen had something in common: they were all darn interesting – determined, risking their lives for one thing or another, living the great adventure. “It is not the timid, the self-doubting and retiring whose experiences and efforts will be remembered,” Hardin concludes. “It is the living of interesting, passion filled, highly driven lives that makes the tales of these eleven lawmen so memorable, and is that which can make our own lived stories worth retelling.” “Hardin has a fascinating style.... almost lyrical. His perspective on the Old West is both romantic and dramatic” –Ned Schwing, Gun Digest Books “Read the truth about these 11 Old West lawmen and enjoy real history!” –John Taffin

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