

HALSEY ENTERPRISE SUPPLEMENT

HALSEY, OREGON, JULY 10, 1924

James Butler Hickock

Known as "Wild Bill," He Killed and Was Killed.

In this issue our story, "Pay Gravel," brings the announcement of the assassination of Wild Bill Hickock. April 12 of this year Henry Ford's weekly paper, the Dearborn Independent, published an authentic account of the death of James Butler Hickock, which was Wild Bill's real name, and of the "Wild Bill-McCandless fight," of which many versions have been current, some of them wilder than Hickock's nickname. We quote below from the article in the Independent, which was written by Walter Noel Burns after interviews with survivors of the scenes described and careful investigation of the facts. Through the courtesy of the Independent we reproduce its illustrations:

The old story runs this way: Ten members of the "McCandless gang," bound on a horse-stealing foray, swooped down on the relay station of the Overland Stage company at "Rock Springs, Kansas," at the outbreak of the civil war. They were led by "Bill McCandless," horse thief and murderer, terror of the border. Wild Bill was alone. He emptied his rifle and six-shooter and then fought on with his bowie knife. Some stories say he killed ten men; some eight. None credit him with having killed less than seven.

The facts are: Only three men were killed. They were Dave McCandles, James Woods and James Gordon. Wild Bill killed McCandles—there is no doubt of that. He shot Woods and Gordon. It is probable Wood died from the wound Wild Bill gave him, though this is not certain. Gordon, according to reliable evidence, was killed by a shot from another man.

The fight did not occur at "Rock Springs, Kansas," usually located in the stories "fifty miles west of Topeka," nor in Kansas at all, but at Rock Creek, Nebraska. "Bill McCandless" of tradition becomes David Colbert McCandles of fact, neither horse thief, murderer nor criminal.

McCandles sold the Elkhorn station to Ben Holliday, [Does the name sound familiar to you, Oregonians?] owner of the Overland stage company. He received a sum

down, the remainder to be paid in monthly installments. Holliday placed Horace Wellman as agent and Wellman was to deliver the monthly payments.

When the first payment came due Wellman told McCandles the money had not come from company headquarters. McCandles was suspicious, but waited another month. Wellman failed to pay the second installment. At 4 o'clock July 12, 1861, McCandles met Wellman at the south door of the cabin.

"I'll get your money in time, Mac," said Wellman, "but I haven't been able to get it yet."

"You're a liar," McCandles



hurled at him, "and a thief to boot."

Mrs. Wellman crowded to the door as her husband retreated into the house and she volleyed vituperation upon the lowering giant before her.

"My business," said McCandles, contemptuously, "is with men, not with a woman."

Wild Bill Hickock thereupon brushed Mrs. Wellman aside and confronted McCandles.

"I am a man," he said.

"I've come to have this out with Wellman," McCandles said. "This ain't no affair of yours. You send Wellman out here so I can settle with him or I'll come in and get him."

Wild Bill stepped back into the house as if to comply. As Wellman did not appear, McCandles walked inside. He was just in time to see Wild Bill disappearing behind a blanket which curtained off the east end of the house as a bedroom.

"Come out from behind that