

FIRST DRAFT

Silent Tom Smith had good reason to keep his past secret

In her 2001 book "Seabiscuit, an American Legend," Laura Hillenbrand re-introduced the American public to a man who had been well-known in the 1930s: Silent Tom Smith.

He was a horse trainer extraordinaire, a cowboy, hunter, ranch foreman and a convicted cattle rustler.

BOB SILBERNAGEL



That last part didn't make it into Hillenbrand's book. But his trial and those of his colleagues were reported in detail in The Daily Sentinel.

Smith was a native of Georgia who arrived in Colorado as a young man. As the 19th century ended, Hillenbrand wrote, Smith "rode out of the wilderness and into Grand Junction, Colorado ... He and his horse strayed onto the vast continuity of Colorado's Unaweep Cattle Range. He had heard that a ranch needed a foreman. He won the job and stayed for twenty years."

Well, not quite 20 years. Smith was the foreman for at least six years — 1907-1913 — of the ranch known as the Unaweep Cattle Range. It was owned in part by Dan Casement, whose father had made a fortune helping to build the Union Pacific Railroad.

The ranch's letterhead in 1907-08 listed R.T. Smith — Robert Thomas Smith — as agent.

Daily Sentinel articles indicate Casement and Smith had a falling out in the summer of 1913, and Smith was fired.

On Dec. 7, 1913, 24 head of Casement's cows were stolen, and according to court testimony, they were trailed from Unaweep Canyon through Bangs Canyon and into Grand Junction, where they were sold to meat packer Clyde Shropshire.

Through Grand Junction attorney Ben Griffith, Casement began pushing for a grand jury.

That occurred early in 1914 and in March, Smith was indicted for cattle theft, along with local cowboys Ira Mock and John Dowling. Shropshire was indicted for receiving stolen goods. Two other men, the Gordon brothers, were indicted for stealing three cows and calves from another rancher.

When the indictments were handed down, the Sentinel noted that Smith "was formerly foreman of the Casement ranch but resigned last summer. He is well known as a rider of bad horses as well as a bear hunter. His arrest caused a decided surprise."

But this wasn't Smith's first brush with the law. In 1908, he went to court for allegedly stealing a calf from another Unaweep Canyon rancher. After the trial, he wrote to his boss, Casement, "I came out all O.K."

Smith, Mock and Dowling went to trial in October 1914 for the theft of the Casement cattle. Shropshire's trial was held in January 1915. In an autobiography he wrote in 1944, Casement said the trials marked the first convictions ever for cattle theft in Mesa County.

"The community in general

BLOTTER COMPILED BY SENTINEL STAFF

Juvenile drinking suspected

A weapon was fired into the air Saturday in the area of 415½ 29½ Road, creating a risk of bodily injury or death.

Juveniles contacted at the address were issued summonses on suspicion of underage consumption of alcohol and released to a parent or guardian.

According to Grand Junction Police Department:

■ A false identity was used March 2 to forge payroll checks in excess of \$5,000 for personal gain.

■ Shana Monter, 30, and Darby Willis, 56, were arrested March 7 at 2809 North Ave. and released on summonses on suspicion of theft of property valued at less than \$300.

■ Kyle Balingit, 22, was arrested Wednes-

day at 1102 Belford Ave. and released on a summons on suspicion of reckless endangerment and prohibited use of a weapon.

■ Two juvenile males, ages 14, were arrested Thursday at 2736 C Road and released on summonses on suspicion of possession of marijuana.

■ Items valued at less than \$300 were stolen from a vehicle near the 2300 block of Logos Drive on Wednesday.

■ Joel Salgado-Rodriguez, 18, and a 16-year-old female, were arrested Thursday on suspicion of shoplifting from a business at 2831 North Ave. and released on summonses.

■ Paul Lavadie, 45, was booked into Mesa County jail Thursday on suspicion of harassing and menacing with a knife and causing a person to fear for life at 1240 Ute Ave.

■ Joseph Earle, 18, and Christopher Cunningham, 19, were arrested Friday on suspi-

cion of shoplifting at 2545 Rimrock Ave. and released on summonses.

■ Daniel Brown, 29, was booked into Mesa County Jail on Friday on suspicion of shoving someone, causing alarm and causing damage to property valued at less than \$750 in the 2700 block of B½ Road.

■ David Guilles, 21, was booked into Mesa County Jail on Friday on suspicion of false imprisonment and harassment in the 900 block of North Avenue.

■ Julian Galindo, 27, was arrested Sunday in the 600 block of Main Street on suspicion of striking a police officer, causing alarm and knowingly using coarse and offensive language.

■ Brian Marble, 22, was arrested Sunday at 436 Main St. on suspicion of first-degree assault and disorderly conduct, after he allegedly struck someone with a bottle, causing injury.

Cash 5 Sunday: 16-21-24-26-32

Pick 3 Sunday: 2-0-0

For information, go to www.coloradolottery.com.



2015

THIS WEEK IN THE LEGISLATURE

Veterans & Military Affairs Committee will hear HB1237 to require prepaid postage to be on all mail-in ballots.

■ **Thursday:** The House Business Affairs & Labor Committee will hear three measures, HB1276, HB1274 and HB1231, which are part of a bipartisan package of workforce development measures. The bills center on workforce training, career pathways for students and enhanced unemployment benefits.

■ **Next week:** With the March revenue forecast in hand, the six-member bipartisan Joint Budget Committee will begin to finalize its figure setting for all state agencies.

All floor action and committees can be watched or heard on the Legislature's website at www.leg.state.co.us. Check that website to see which measures are available for remote testimony, and how to register to speak.

— Charles Ashby

Symphony accepting used band instruments for school programs

THE SENTINEL STAFF

Reminding residents in the fictional town of River City, Iowa, about the power a few trumpets had on the fabled walls of Jericho, professor Harold Hill explained how children at the turn of the last century could be saved from temptation by the redeeming influence of music.

None would be able to resist "the glitter of crashing cymbals, the thunder of rolling drums, (and) the shimmer of trumpets," Hill told a crowd gathered in the first act of Meredith Wilson's play, "The Music Man."

More than 60 years later, the electric thrill generated by "76 Trombones" is still enjoyed by nearly all who hear it. Without the brass and timpani, however, there can be no music or chance at redemption.

That's why Bringing Music to Life, a new nonprofit organization, is asking Coloradans to donate gently used band and orchestra instruments at any one of 17 locations around the state, including the Grand Junction Symphony office, 414 Main St.

Donations will be taken from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through

Friday until March 28 when the drive ends, according to a news release.

"This program positively impacts local students and helps keep the arts alive in Colorado," spokeswoman Lauren Cameron wrote in an email to The Daily Sentinel.

Studies show music improves a student's listening skills, creative thinking, self-discipline, self-esteem and team spirit, according to Steve Blatt, founder and executive director of Bringing Music to Life.

Donated instruments will be repaired and awarded to deserving school music programs at the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year, said Cameron, a manager at Colorado Public Radio, which is promoting the drive.

Cash donations are also being accepted to offset the cost of repairing and refurbishing the instruments, Blatt said.

Tide schools with a majority of students receiving free or reduced-cost lunches are encouraged to apply for instruments now through March 31. Download the application and learn about the program at bringmusic.org.

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Weekend delivery includes the following dates in 2015: Nov. 26.
Single Copy: \$7.75 daily and \$150 Sunday.
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Attention Dare to Care Auto Customers

Plus anyone else who likes saving money on car maintenance and repairs

If you would like to take advantage of the unbeatable savings from this year's Savings Plan make sure you sign up by April 1st. Remember, you're always welcome at Dare to Care whether you choose our Plan or not. Go to daretocaregj.com or stop by our facility at 2914 North Avenue for more information.

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We're wearing jeans for charity
at The Daily Sentinel
Ask me how you can help!

The employees of The Daily Sentinel have joined together to adopt a local non-profit organization/charity of the month. We want to help raise awareness and badly needed funds for these organizations that are dedicated to helping people in our community.

MARCH JEANS FOR CHARITY ORGANIZATION:

MESA COUNTY LIBRARY FOUNDATION'S DIGITAL CREATION STUDIO

The next step in the expansion and improvement of the Central Library is The Digital Creation Studio. The studio will bring the power of cutting-edge technology to library users. One of the first digital projects, Veterans Remember, will record and digitally preserve the recollections of Mesa County war veterans. The Digital Creation Studio is expected to cost \$752,500, and the Foundation seeks to raise \$200,000 toward this cost.

Please join with us and send your tax deductible donation to:

Mesa County Public Library Foundation

P.O. Box 3668, Grand Junction, CO 81502

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