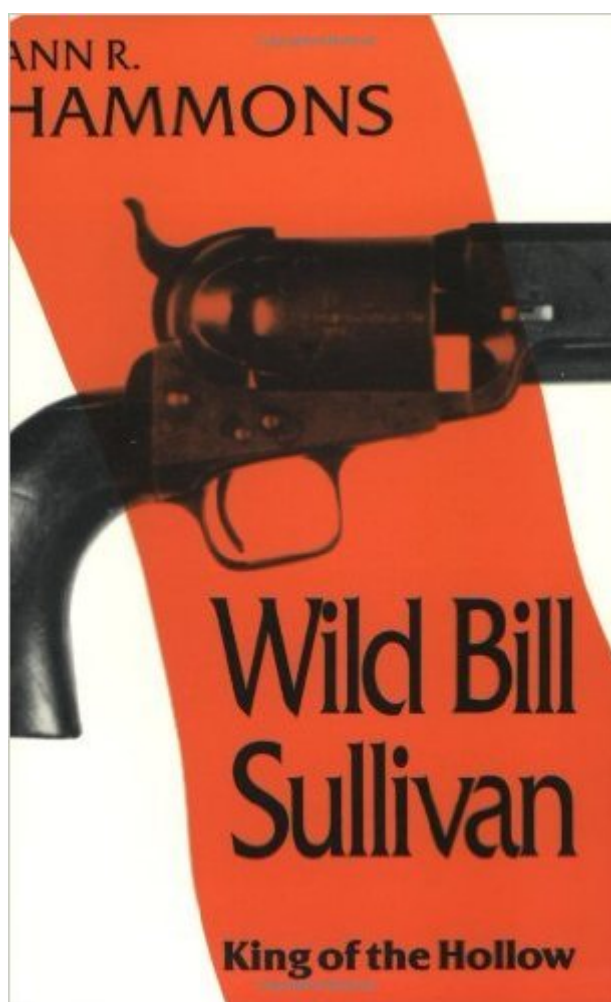


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Wild Bill Sullivan: King Of The Hollow



Synopsis

The rollicking history of a dreaded real-life figure in the folklore of the Mississippi backwoods. Thanks to the subject of this fascinating book, Sullivan's Hollow, a seemingly idyllic valley in south Mississippi, gained its rightful position among the notorious place names in American folklore. To the citizenry in the hamlets of Sullivan's Hollow Wild Bill Sullivan was the fearsome local rascal whose bent for pranks, jokes, and chicanery quite often verged on the murderous. To travelers his name inspired a deadly dread of a chance meeting with him on a lonely trail. Wild Bill's love of liquor and his bounding in and out of trouble embellished his darkly checkered reputation. For the annals of folklore he is prime material. Here for the first time in paperback is the story of this nineteenth-century Mississippi maverick, as told by his great-granddaughter. She recounts stories of his best-known "pranks"-such as stripping a Bible peddler naked and hitching him all day to a plow, and she puts a believable face on the legend of Wild Bill's having killed fifty men (or more, as the story proliferates). What reader of this book could fail to believe that no traveler wanted to be passing through Sullivan's Hollow after sundown?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Wild Bill Sullivan is probably the most colorful character that South Mississippi has ever produced. Born in mid-18th century, he was the King of Sullivan's Hollow and was accused of 50 killings. He was also the center of numerous pranks and jokes. Because she was a college history professor, the author skillfully weaves the sometimes far-fetched tales into an account of an atypical frontier culture. The narrative also includes pictures and a description of one of the oldest homes in South Mississippi, the Sullivan Home, now on the National Register of Homes. At the beginning of this small but fascinating book, Ms. Hammons, the great-granddaughter of Wild Bill, traces the Sullivans' Irish Roots back to the 1750's. Thomas Sullivan, founder of the Mississippi branch of the clan, had 22 children, 11 by his white legal wife and 11 by his common-law Indian wife. A genealogy of the family is located in the appendix of the book. The latter section of the book centers around the years 1900-1980 and concentrates on other Smith County stories. The book is well-researched with footnotes and bibliography. Here's an example of one of the humorous tales in the book: Outsiders in the late 1800's feared stopping over in the Hollow because of Wild Bill's reputed antipathy towards strangers. One traveler got caught at dark and stopped at the edge of the Hollow. He was cordially greeted, fed, given a bed by the fire, and served a plentiful country breakfast. His host refused any pay for these services. The traveler thanked his host and expressed his relief that he had met such a nice family and had avoided Wild Bill. In reality, Wild Bill had been his host, but he sent the man on his way without revealing his identity.

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