

FACT FROM FICTION

If you're like me, when you read historical fiction or see a movie "based on true events," you want to know which parts of the story are actual and factual and which parts are made up or even false! The accounts of the "lynching of Ah Quong Tai" I found in books were at the most, six to eight pages long, and a good portion of those pages were photographs and maps. Writing 250-page historical novel required filling in many large holes. There are so many things we just don't know. The skeleton of the plot of my novel is factual. I've been known to say that the plot is the best part of my story, and I did not write that part. When filling in the blanks of the story, I tried to write what was possible or even probable, for the most part, from what I did know from the historical records.

So here goes, sorting out fact from fiction, chapter by chapter, from *Justice for All: The Search of Big Poker Tom*.

Ch. 1 Digger's Gift

1. The story begins with the minister's dog bringing in Tai's braid. I changed this from an account by Ella Cody Cain who wrote that By Day's dogs one day dragged in the long black queue, having dug it up. (P. 69, *The Story of Early Mono County*) There was a minister in town but whether he had a dog is unknown. When I began writing the story, I had no evidence that there was a church in Bridgeport. I made up a name, Reverend C. J. Hart, pastor of a Methodist church using the school building on Sundays. Later, in reading the *Bridgeport Chronicle-Union* from earlier in 1891, I discovered that there was a church, a Methodist church using the schoolhouse, pastored by a Reverend Abibone. I left my created name in the story. It is likely that he worked with Sheriff Cody on occasion, but whether he had a close relationship is unknown. The Methodist bishop transferred Reverend Abibone and his family to another church during the summer of 1891.
2. The Mono County Courthouse, built in 1880 is present in Bridgeport today, very prominent, and still used for court proceedings. I was there one day when the "stripes" as they are called because of their black and white uniforms, were filed in to stand trial. And there is now a metal dictator screening required before one enters the building. The Victorian filigree, including the scales of justice, are still there to see on the front of the building.
3. The *Bridgeport Chronicle-Union* was a weekly newspaper printed in Bridgeport from 1888 to 1930 by brothers Bob and Alex Folger. It could be subscribed to for three dollars for the year. Bob was short and stocky, and Alex was tall and thin, so they often joked that through their newspaper you could get "the long and the short of it." I searched through many issues of the paper, all from microfilm in libraries in Bridgeport, Sacramento, and Berkeley, to get a feel for the community and the era, and to get the details of the story. All in all, reading those articles, primary documentation, was probably the best source of information for the story. I printed out the many articles for my research. Bob, with his wry sense of humor and tongue-in-cheek wit, although a Quaker, might have made a great late night talk show host, had he lived a hundred years later.
4. Richard Barnard, yes, he was a real person. He was a clerk at the county courthouse, a bit cantankerous by nature, and he did write an anonymous letter to the *San Francisco Examiner*.

5. There was a blacksmith in Bridgeport, right on Main Street at that time named Philip Hughes.
6. There were several saloons in Bridgeport at that time. The Corner Courthouse Saloon was right by the courthouse and part of the red-brick Severe Building, the “Brick,” as it was called. As was often the case in the Old West, the room above the saloon was used as a courtroom. The upstairs courtrooms in the courthouse, though only ten years old, were unusable due to a leaky roof. The soggy carpet, with its mold and smell, needed replacing. The ceilings had fallen down, damaging the furniture. The red Severe Building on Main Street today houses Ken’s Sporting Goods. I have seen the stairway that comes down to the sidewalk, but the room upstairs used for court is inaccessible today. Perhaps it will be restored as a historical site one day.
7. Mono County Sheriff Michael J. Cody (what a great name for a sheriff!) served one elected term, 1888-1892. Mono County is a hundred miles long, north to south, a large area for one man to cover. Cody’s photo is on the cover of the book.
8. Sinnamon’s Field was where AQT was buried. Some of the articles I found said that it was across the street from By Day’s property. At least one other source said that it was on the other side of town. But as the story explains, his bones are no longer there, as they were shipped to China later.
9. The Sheriff’s house, provided by the county, was part of a complex made up of his living quarters, an office, and the jail. It was located only about fifty feet behind the courthouse. The stone jail is still there, open for inspection., but the sheriff’s house and office have been removed.
10. Constable Crowell was the sheriff’s assistant. One source I found said the constable was the sheriff’s father, but all other sources I found said it Crowell.

Ch. 2 The Riderless Horse

1. Dr. Sally Zanjani, see Sources in menu of the website for this book (www.waynepurcellauthor.com). She wrote that the “riderless horse” returned to the reservation in Nevada. Edward Johnson, whose account does not run as close to the Zanjani’s account as it used as its source the Hawthorne newspaper, said that Tom’s horse was found in Bridgeport. It might seem like a stretch for a horse to do a solo return 90+ miles to its home, however my research showed that it is possible, that it has been known to occur.
2. The account of Bear’s Ears and his brother seeing the horse coming in is completely made up, as a possible way it might have occurred. I wrote these two brothers as members of the Walker River Paiute Reservation in Schurz, Nevada, along the Walker River, north of Walker Lake, where the reservation is to this day. They are one of the few Native American tribes given a reservation on their ancient homeland, a good thing for them, instead of being forced to relocate as many did.
3. According to Joseph Lent, my Paiute consultant and friend, rabbit’s head soup and rabbit kidneys were a coveted part of a cooked rabbit, a delicacy to the Indians.
4. “Poker Tom” is the actual, recorded name of the missing Indian. I expanded it to “Big Poker Tom” for the sake of the story, to emphasize his size and to add some interest.
5. Captain Charley was a respected leader in the Walker Paiute tribe. Edward C. Johnson’s book indicates that he was not the only “captain” in the tribe at that time, but he is the only one referred to in any of the accounts I found. In 2016, I was privileged to have a short visit with one of his descendants.
6. There was a search party that went to Bridgeport, however, the number of people is not recorded. Only some of the names can be found in the record.

7. The name of Poker Tom's wife is unknown, to my knowledge. "Big Coffee" is a fictional name. Tom's wife was, however, a part of the search party, and her sister, "Daisy," also a fictional name, did accompany her.
8. Pine Grove Jim is the actual name of a relative of Poker Tom, a cousin or a brother, as recorded in the Edward C. Johnson book. He was known to have a short fuse, as the story indicates.
9. The children's fear is related to accounts of the Donner Party, in which Whites ate other Whites who had died of starvation. There is an account, in Daniel James Brown's book, *The Indifferent Stars Above: The Harrowing Saga of the Donner Party*, of their Indian guides being killed for food—a horrific incident. Accounts of those incidents spread through the mountains and got to the Indians. Indian children would run and hide in fear when Whites came into Indian reservations.
10. One of the members of the search party was the teenage son of Captain Charley. Running Rabbit is the name I gave him.

Ch. 3 Shelter in the Storm

1. The weather was not good that week, according to the newspaper, but probably not as bad as I wrote it. This chapter was boring to me when I originally wrote it. I considered deleting it, but was advised that beefing it up would help, so I did.
The "ghost-like specters" on Walker Lake were feared by the Paiutes as spirits of the dead. The mists blew around as described in the book. I read about this phenomenon and saw it for myself the first time I went there. The winds were so bad that they closed the road down just after I drove out on the south end of the lake. Here is a photograph I took that day.



2. Negotiations for the passage of the Southern Pacific narrow-gauge railroad through the Walker River Paiute Reservation were ably done by the leader/s of the tribe. The Indians were allowed free passage on the railroad, however they were not allowed inside the passenger cars, only atop or in between them. Sparks from the locomotive would land on the and burn holes in their clothing. This restriction was standard practice in the West at that time, so not surprising, but discriminatory and debasing at best. The Indians were supposed to be allowed to take their goods, like their dried fish, to cities to market them, but that contract agreement was sometimes broken by the railroad officials.
3. Wovoka's gatherings of Native Americans from across the country, as many as 800 of them at a time, scared the residents of Hawthorne. The unfulfilled promises made by the Whites, resulting in deaths of many Indians, angered the Walker Paiutes and added greatly to the tension. It is true that the citizens of Hawthorne requested an army outpost there, but that it was denied it was deemed unnecessary.

4. Sarg Johnson and the toll booth he worked at is found in the historical record, pretty much as I wrote it.
5. The literature records the leader of the Bridgeport group of Paiutes as being named Captain Jim. I was told by the members of a writers' critique group I was in that there were just too many captains in my story, that it was hard to keep track of them all, so I renamed him "Old Man Jim." It is true that he wore a colorful US military jacket as did the other two captains in this story.

Ch. 4 Sheriff Michael J. Cody

1. Mono County Sheriff Michael J. Cody was very much a historical figure. You'll find his photograph on the cover of this book, on the left. He was elected in 1888 for a four-year term. He was married to Catherine and had four children. They have only two in this story. I was unaware of the other two MJ Cody was the Grand Marshall of the 1891 July 4th parade in Bridgeport. That parade continues today, a parade that began during the Civil War.
2. The strategy the search team employed is pretty much as written, with one exception. So much happened on Tuesday that I decided to move one thing to Wednesday in order to even things out. The blood spots were actually found on Tuesday, but you'll find them on Wednesday within the covers of my book.
3. The Paiutes and the Whites did actually make a treaty with one another in about 1860. A race was proposed, to a small pile of bows and arrows and guns, which the Indians won, handily. The prize was all of the weapons. The Whites showed the Indians how to use the guns, which greatly helped them with their hunting and food supply.
4. The layout of Bridgeport, as pointed out by Old Man Jim to the Nevada Paiutes, is still pretty much the same today. The business section of town is on the west side of the East Fork of the Walker River. The Old Town, on the east side of the river, is in ruins. One major change however is that the bridge of "Bridgeport" across the East Fork of the Walker River is now a much narrower foot bridge, not a bridge that you could be driven over with heavily loaded freight wagons pulled by long teams of horses or mules. There are today no signs of a Chinese quarter in "Old Town" that I'm aware of, as is the case with many cities in the West where Chinese communities existed at one time. The Chinatown of Santa Ana, California, I'm told, was burned down at the orders of the city council leaders in 1905. Similar stories could be told of many such Chinese communities.
5. The "Old Sleeping Indian" on the crest of the Sierras west of Bridgeport, part of the Sawtooth Ridge, known by other names as well, is clearly visible today. It is on the cover of the book, from a photograph I took in 2019. In the creation story of the Paiutes, a key female player died and ended up at Travertine Hot Springs, and a key male player who was in love with her wanted to die where he could see where she was. He became the "Old Sleeping Indian." The presence of a painting in the sheriff's office is fictional, though possible. The same is true for the "Justice for All" plaque mentioned.
6. It's true that Catherine was a piano teacher and known for her good cooking. Prisoners sometimes regretted leaving jail because of her delicious food! But some prisoners were said to grow tired of hearing inexperienced children through the walls laying the piano.

Ch. 5 Reporting In

1. Amasa F. Bryant, one of the founders of Bridgeport and a large landowner of the downtown area, was a generous man. He donated several properties to the town for municipal use, including the courthouse, the jail, and the community center.

2. The Nevada Paiute interview reports about “Poker Tom” on Tuesday, June 2, are accurate and true.

Ch. 6 Sign from the Meadows

1. The historical record shows that on Wednesday, June 3, the discovery took place of the saddle, saddle blanket, and the place where Poker Tom slept in a field north of town.

Ch. 7 Lunch at Tai’s

1. The Paiutes’ visit to the Chinese restaurant actually took place on Tuesday night rather than at lunch on Wednesday. There was so much that took place on Tuesday that I chose to move that to Wednesday to spread things out. I was unable to find what the composition of that spying group was, so I took an educated guess.
2. I could not find the actual name of Dimples in the historical record. She was married to a man who became a highly respected leader in the Bridgeport Paiute community. Divorce was extremely rare in the 1800’s Paiute community. Paiute men who left their wives were looked down upon and shunned. Dimples’s husband was only 17 at that time, quite a young man. I changed his name to Long Sammy out of respect for him and his descendants. (See the *Sacramento Daily Union*, June 11, 1891, for verification, as well as the *San Francisco Examiner*, June 14, 1891. Both say that “he had left his wife for some reason.”)
3. The beautiful jade statue in Tai’s store, “Fooshey,” is fictional, though quite possible. Its description is based on a two-foot-high statue that I saw in a store in Cambria, California, which looked pretty much as I described the one in the book.
4. Brownish-red spots were actually found on the restaurant floor. There was the appearance of pooled blood underneath one of the floorboards. The bullet hole and spots found under the wallpaper are also true to the historical record.
5. Buying food from the back of the Leavitt House (now the Bridgeport Inn) and another Bridgeport hotel as well was a common practice in those days. The Indians paid one half of a day’s pay doing ranch work or housework, but it must have been worth it to them. I’ve enjoyed a couple of meals at the Bridgeport Inn myself and I can testify that it is still “good grub!”

Ch. 8 A Shocking New Turn

1. Captain John was a fascinating character who lived on the north shore of Mono Lake. He had several wives. One account I read said that he killed the previous leader, Chief Tenaya, with a rock, kind of a coup, so that he could take over the leadership of the Yosemite/Mono Lake part of the Paiute tribe. Below is a famous photograph of him, taken by Andrew Forbes, of Captain John wearing his “war dance dress.” The white spots on his chest are eagle down, recording his slain enemies. Another more “civilized” appearing photo can be found in the book.



2. Travertine Hot Springs is a delightful place to visit to this day. It's above the Toiyabe National Forest headquarters building which you'll find south of Bridgeport on Highway 395. The hot springs are at the end of a dirt road. It is considered a sacred place by the Paiutes.
3. Harry George is the historical name of the man who served as the *ugwahanna* or judge for the Paiute trial. The procedure described is from the historical record. The Nevada Historical Society has a photo showing what it looked like later in history, judging another case.
4. The wife of Long Sammy, "Dimples," my name for her, did actually testify, both in the Indian Justice Court and in the US court. Her testimony in the Paiute court successfully diverted attention away from her lover, Ah Quong Tai, for a time. It created a sharp division between the Paiutes of Nevada and the Paiutes of Bridgeport.

Ch. 9 A Clue from the River

1. Poker Tom's coat was actually pulled out of the East Fork of the Walker River by Bryant's Dam, as written. Sheriff Cody offered them the use of a dragging apparatus, but the Indians declined, as written in the story. And it is also true that the Walker women were mocked and ridiculed by the White men of Bridgeport, many of them town leaders, embarrassing them.

Ch. 10 Sorting Things Out

1. The story of a man who looked like Poker Tom and a well-dressed Indian woman is a complete fabrication, attempting to complicate the story by creating one more option in a "who done it" murder mystery.
2. Scores of armed Paiutes did actually come streaming into Bridgeport from every direction to support the search efforts. Ella Cain wrote that the Paiutes outnumbered the residents of town two to one. The late Lee Shackelton, a former Yosemite National Park ranger, citing the scrapbook of his great-grandfather, James W. Orndorff, wrote that there were between 300 and 400 Indians congregated in Bridgeport. Not all of them, of course, were armed, as his number most likely included women and children.

3. I found no record of there being a joss house, or temple, in Bridgeport's Chinese quarter. It is likely, however, that there was one, with statues/idols in front of which incense was burned and gifts were brought.
4. There actually was a raid by Sheriff Cody on an opium den that week, though apparently it was Wednesday night. I found minutes of a court appearance of Ah Sing requesting a writ of habeas corpus at 7 am on Thursday, June 4, 1891, asking to be released from jail. This request was denied. On Saturday, June 6, Ah Sing was convicted for having an opium den and selling opium to Indians and was on the following Monday sentenced to a \$100 fine and/or imprisonment. (June 13, 1891, *Bridgeport Chronicle-Union*)

Ch. 11 Checking on Things

1. The story of Ye Park escaping the jail by burning a hole in the floor is historically accurate. It happened at 5:30 AM on December 16, 1882. (See Frank Wedertz, *Mono Diggings*, p. 123) The whole jail went up in flames after he escaped, almost killing the other prisoner, and requiring a new jail to be built for the county. That stone jail, made of stone quarried locally, can be viewed today, just behind the courthouse.

Ch. 12 A Very Strange Saturday Morning

1. There actually was a total eclipse of the sun on Saturday morning, June 6, 1891, which was very disconcerting to the Indians. It set the stage for an ominous day and gave the medicine man, Captain John, opportunity to interpret its meaning, adding more suspense to what was going to become a very macabre Saturday! The solar eclipse had been predicted in the previous Saturday's "*Onion*," as beginning at 6:25 AM and ending at 7:54 AM, so it did not catch the Whites by surprise.
2. The story of the Folgers' flag and the death, burial, and reburial of their beloved horse Jinny by sawing off her legs is true. (See Frank Wedertz, *Mono Diggings*, p. 84 and Ella Cain, *The Story of Mono County*, pp. 58-60.) Bob Folger wrote that "the good Indian- for Tom is a 'good Injun' now, without a doubt" in an article he wrote for his Saturday, June 6 edition. Whether Sheriff Cody actually confronted him or not, I do not know, but one can imagine that it was quite disturbing to the sheriff and certainly a possibility, given that the sheriff was embroiled in a very dangerous situation that day. He didn't need Folger or anyone else to make matters worse.

Ch. 13 The Startling Autopsy Report

1. It is true that a group of Paiute youth, whose names are unknown, did discover a human torso eight miles out of town, downstream from Bridgeport, northeast of town in the East Fork of the Walker River. They flagged down Maurice Hayes and his son and asked for his assistance. Together, they figured out a way to get the trunk into town. A fascinating autopsy did place in the old Stanton house under the direction of county physician Dr. Keables.
2. Dr. Keables's chemical test revealed a very high presence of calcium in the flesh, leading to his conclusion that the trunk had very likely been pickled, as in food preparation. My friends who are retired chemistry and biology professors at Biola University were helpful working out the details of this test. And my own college training in biology and chemistry came in handy as well.
3. And yes, believe it or not, there actually had been a "Big Feed" given by Ah Quong Tai a few weeks before, just after the second poker game between Poker Tom and AQT, with a strange tasting, "damn tough" meat. I've sometimes thought that this story is kind of

cross between the 1955-75 TV show *Gunsmoke* with Marshall Dillon and the creepy, 1991 movie, *Fried Green Tomatoes*.

Ch. 14 The Case Explodes

1. Lieutenant Wilson was a historical person. He was a tall, college-educated Paiute. He arrived midway through the story and became the spokesman for the Paiutes.
2. The inspection of Tai's basement did reveal three wooden-staved barrels. I have looked over the dilapidated restaurant remains in my visits, expecting to find a stairway to an underground basement, but thus far have not found one. In some photos, there is an attached small room on the back side of the restaurant/store building. I'm not sure what that was for. Maybe there is a stairway to a basement somewhere yet to be found?

Ch. 15 The *Nehannedu's* Pronouncement

1. Harry George, the judge or *nehannedu's* actual name, did find Tai guilty Saturday night during the proceedings of their Paiute court. The threats to burn the town down and annihilate its residents were really made, and the presence of the large number of armed Paiutes in town made it a real possibility.
2. The hiring of Tom's accountant Hanson as his lawyer happened as written, with the deed to Tai's store agreed to as the payment for his services. How and why Hanson talked Tai into confessing is a mystery to me. Perhaps Hanson was plotting greedily all along to take advantage of Tai and obtain his assets, since as his accountant, he knew they were substantial.

Ch. 16 Trouble at the Bridgeport Methodist Church

1. The disruption on June 7, 1891 in the Methodist Church service has no basis in the historical record, however, it is quite plausible. That idea of the banging on the wall interrupting the service was the genius idea of my good friend Gene Hawver. The Paiutes had stated publicly the night before that stacking wood against the buildings was what they intended to do on Sunday. And it is what actually happened that day.
2. The service, invented for the story, is typical of what might have happened in such a church meeting in those days. My 1970's experience of attending a small Methodist church in East Concord, Vermont came into play. That New England church also had a foot-pedaled pump organ and a polished brass cross on a table at the front of the room.
3. Katie's being launched off the ground into the air by the bell rope came from two incidents I experienced while I was researching the book. One was while attending the Bridgeport Community Church in a building originally built in 1901. The Sunday my wife and I attended, the speaker's son or daughter rang the bell, a great privilege. The other experience was attending a small church in Baker, Nevada, just outside of Great Basin National Park, and seeing the heavy bell rung there, and observing the pull of the rope when it was on the upswing.

Ch. 17 The Coroner's Inquest

1. The inquest was actually held on Sunday afternoon, something quite unusual in those days, or even today. Tai's lawyer actually testified against him, violating all the ethics of jurisprudence. Hanson later had his license to practice law removed by the State Bar of California for doing that. I had very few details of how an inquest was done but researched it and took a stab at it from what I learned. A six-person jury, all males, was the practice of the day. Coroner's inquests are still done today, but with changes, of course.

2. In 1872, California's constitution was amended, reversing the prohibition of Indians testifying in court. It was, however, not the practice of the day, so it was unusual for Dimples to give testimony.
3. The Coroner's Inquest jury recommended that Tai be charged with murder and Sheriff Cody followed through and filed charges against Ah Quong Tai.

Ch. 18 New Legal Representation

1. Parker and Murphey were hired by Tai, after By Day notified the sheriff of Hanson's departure from town. The lawyers also took advantage of the situation and cleaned out Tai's entire store. It's true that they celebrated that night and that Murphey failed to show up at the hearing the next day due to his hangover. He was reprimanded by the California State Bar for doing so. A friend who is a lawyer has suggested that all lawyers should be required to read this book to warn them of taking advantage of immigrants.
2. It is true that the weather was icy cold and unfriendly that night, with gale force winds blowing.

Ch. 19 A First Attempt

1. In 1891, the first Mono County pay out of bounties for coyote skins after the state law was passed, in actuality, took place on Thursday, July 2. I took the liberty of moving it to June 8 to add some more color to the story. The law went into effect at the end of May. The state paid out \$5 a pelt, a lot of money back then, and \$230 was paid for 46 good coyote skins in Bridgeport on that day. Sixteen pelts were rejected for not including the snouts, a loss of \$80. According to the "Onion," several of the County Board of Supervisors participated in the pay out, "baptizing" the scalps with kerosene, and watched the incineration before returning to their room in the courthouse for a County Supervisors meeting.
2. The Preliminary Hearing had to be postponed that Monday, adding greatly to the tension of the situation for poor Sheriff Cody, and the whole town for that matter. And the lost paperwork that morning, sought out by Richard Barnard, actually occurred. The minutes were apparently found later as they were used by subsequent investigations. I tried to find the Coroner's Inquest minutes but failed.

Ch. 20 Behind Closed Doors

1. Jimmy Josephus, in reality, did bring his 75, armed police brigade into Bridgeport from the Walker River Paiute Reservation on Monday. They arrived about 3:00 PM. It must have been quite an impressive sight to see them ride across the bridge and down Main Street.
2. Along with many other Bridgeport families, the Codys moved into the Leavitt House Monday night. Ella Cody Cain later recorded the conversation her mother Catherine had with Liza Charley about burning down a house.
3. Factoring in the failure of Wovoka's prophecies was suggested by Sally Zanjani in her book, *Ghost Dance Writer*. I chose Bob Folger to bring that up in the story, but it is unknown if that subject was actually discussed that week.
4. There must have been some kind of closed-door meeting involving the sheriff before Tuesday's Preliminary Hearing, although there is no specific historical record of one. Much of what was discussed there had to have been talked over and decided beforehand, as mentioned in the story. Perhaps there was another meeting, without the sheriff, on Sunday. When I originally wrote the description of that meeting, I had only read that it was rumored that a member of the Mono County Board of Supervisors was

part of that meeting, a man never identified. I made up the Walter Dunder III character and enjoyed doing so. But later, shortly before the book was published, an article came out that identified that person by name. As I did with the Long Sammy character, I chose to protect the man's descendants and left him as "Walter Dunder III."

5. In the various accounts of the story I found, there were variations. A load of records went to the dump from the county courthouse in 1976, records that I would have loved to have been able to read, like minutes of County Board of Supervisors meetings. Someone learned of what was happening at the dump and got word out to rescue many of the documents. Those records are now part of the Mono County Historical Society collection. But some of those records were not recovered and are lost forever.

In the process of researching the story, there was other information that I came very close to being able to see, but again, failed in the end. A retired Yosemite National Park ranger, Lee Shackelton, a resident of Mariposa, wrote an article in 2009 on the incident using his great-grandfather's scrapbook, as mentioned previously. When I went to Mariposa to find him, I learned that he had just passed away a couple of months before. I was able to locate his children and ask them to see if they could find the scrapbook. They looked for it when they did his estate sale but were unable to find it. Maybe Ranger Shackelton donated the scrapbook to a library or museum and it will turn up one day.

6. We know that the sheriff did not intervene in the lynching, that he did not try to protect Ah Quong Tai. He was absent. Why he did not intervene is a mystery we will probably never solve. My rendition of it may be very different from what actually took place. I merely took a stab at it. It's not the ending people expected, not the typical ending of a normal Western story in which the hero sheriff comes through in the end and they all live happily ever after. But I felt that this story, being a historical novel, needed to stay within the confines of history as we know it. It was a no-win situation for the sheriff. I made up Cody's episode with the bottle in the bar of the Leavitt House and it may be very far from what actually occurred. I considered several options, and that was the one I settled on.

Ch. 21 The Hearing

1. The actual reasons for the defense attorneys' request to drop the charges are recorded for us. The minutes of the trial may still be out there somewhere, but I was unable to locate them. We know that the trial, as planned, ended just after lunch on Tuesday, without objection by the prosecuting attorney, and during the time of Ella Cody's party.

Ch. 22 Paiute Reception

1. The ugly incidents surrounding the release of Tai into the hands of the Indians, and the path to his execution, are fairly well documented by eyewitnesses. One account, however, of the execution, says that the actual dismemberment of Tai was done in silence. I considered using that description, but decided against it, as most of the other accounts differ. The version I used follows the description I found in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 4, 1891, although I did attempt to tone it down some. The names of the seven executioners are listed there, contradicting what the Clampers, tongue-in-cheek most likely, put on the bronze plaque in front of the Severe Building, in front of Ken's Sporting Goods.

2. There is a mention by Bob Folger in the June 13 "Onion" of a several Whites "witnessing the interment," so it appears that some words may have been said, perhaps something like what Reverend Hart (Abibone) did at that time.
3. The well-timed reappearance of the sheriff is also a matter of record, as is Dr. Keables's request to have the Paiutes return and clean up the mess.
4. Ella Cody Cain later wrote of the trauma she had for the rest of her life, into her 80's, from seeing the execution from the courthouse. The other children, all girls in actuality, most likely suffered similar lifelong trauma.

Ch. 23 Paiute Farewell Party

1. It is true that the visiting Paiutes, as requested by the sheriff, did move north on the night of the lynching, as requested by the sheriff, but only a couple of miles. The details of the two-part *Yaga Nuga* or Cry Dance and burial, one part there by Bridgeport and the other on the reservation in Schurz, Nevada, are consistent with Paiute tradition. I give credit to Joseph Lent for pointing me to the material written for the Bridgeport Indian Colony that I used.
2. The practice of cutting was actually addressed by Wovoka/Jack Wilson, telling Native Americans from across the country. He exhorted the Indians not to participate in it, as Daisy tried to convince Big Coffee to do, but that did not happen, at least in the story I wrote. The details of what actually happened are not recorded.

Ch. 24 Opinions and Investigations

1. Barnard did write an anonymous letter to the *San Francisco Chronicle* which got printed June 19, 1891, on the front page.
2. Colonel Bee, the Chinese Consul in California, was a white man who was strongly committed to advocating for Chinese rights and concerns. He started out in California with a mining operation and hired many Chinese, which began his lifelong love and care for them. The Hopkins investigation resulted from Bee's requests in Washington on their behalf. The lawsuit against Bridgeport may also have involved him. Neither of these, however, accomplished much of anything on behalf of the Chinese.

Ch. 25 The Grand Jury Report

1. The Halloween incident with the youth wanting to burn down Tai's restaurant, though conceivable, has no historical basis. There had been previous threats by the Indians to burn down the store, however, but none by the Whites.
2. Likewise, the fight in the Corner Courthouse Saloon is complete fiction. It just seemed like an appropriate way to resolve the conflict at the end of the story and relieve the tension.
3. The church service the next morning has no historical support, but perhaps something like that did happen on that day.
4. The Grand Jury concluded that Ah Quong Tai killed Poker Tom. You may be wondering whether that is true or not. One bit of evidence that seems to support that conclusion came forth right after the incident, according to the June 11 *Bridgeport Chronicle-Union*. The Chinese community reported that other crimes had been committed by Tai. He had been accused of killing a Chinese man in Virginia City before he came to Bridgeport. Also, there had been a nude Chinese body found in the river in Bridgeport a year or two before. Some of the Chinese said the man had been killed and robbed by Tai. Tai said the man was insane and had probably committed suicide. But the man had purchased goods from David Hays two days before and was said to have seemed perfectly sane at

that time. The Chinese said that the man had been drugged and drowned by Tai. They also revealed that Tai had made plans to sell his business in the fall and was planning on moving to Reno to start a ring of thieves with members of a Chinese tong. Since he knew English and could read, he was going to be the mastermind for their criminal activities. It would be nice if the Grand Jury's paperwork would come to light, but it was not available anywhere I looked.

5. Bob Folger was quick to defend Sheriff Cody in his 12-5-91 paper, "So far as Sheriff Cody is concerned, Ah Tia (sic) was not in his custody, and it was not his business to hang around a Justice's Court day after day for fear something might happen."

Ch. 26 The Years Beyond

1. The collection of Tai's bones for them to be shipped back to China is a matter of record.
2. The story of By Day's friend obtaining Tai's braid for the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco has historical support. The museum was apparently moved at some point, but no one knows where the braid ended up.