



Billy the Kid's Jail, Santa Fe, New Mexico: A Glimpse into Wild West History on the Southwest's Frontier

Lynn Michelson

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The young outlaw known as Billy the Kid spent the winter of 1880-1881 in Santa Fe--trying desperately to get out of its jail.

He talked to lawyers.

He wrote the Governor, pleading for his promised pardon.

He even tried digging his way out!

Nothing worked.

Billy only "escaped" the "safest jail in the Territory" in March 1881, when deputies finally escorted him to the railroad station for a trip to southern New Mexico--where a jury of his peers waited to convict him of murder.

But just where was this invincible Santa Fe jail?

Today, in Santa Fe, two plaques mark the spot. Or rather, two competing spots . . .

Lynn Michelsohn tracks down historical sources to identify the long-disputed location of Billy the Kid's Santa Fe jail and to provide this **brief** glimpse of life in the Wild West on the Southwestern Frontier (12,000 words; 16 photographs, drawings, and maps).

Recommended for Western history buffs, Billy the Kid aficionados, and anyone who loves Santa Fe.

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