



My Sixty Years on the Plains: Trapping, Trading, and Indian Fighting

W. T. Hamilton

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Of course I knew how to scalp, and soon accomplished the feat, much to his satisfaction, for he said, “You are broke in now. You will do.”

Following the doctor’s orders for a change of climate, in 1842 William Hamilton found himself accompanying a party of trappers on a year-long expedition.

Heading into the wild, Hamilton would prove himself to be a fast learner, as adept with a firearm as with sign language: this early experience would be the making of him.

As the nineteenth century progressed, along with many other trappers Hamilton found himself drawn into the Indian Wars brought about by territorial expansion.

Exploring, trapping, trading and fighting, Hamilton shows how every aspect of a mountain man’s life relied on his wits and knowledge in order survive the inhospitable environments.

First published in 1905, when the experiences of such pushing, adventurous and fearless men were becoming a thing of the past, Hamilton’s unassuming memoir relates an extraordinary life in a disappearing American West.

William Thomas Hamilton (1822-1908), also known as Wildcat Bill, was a Scottish-born mountain man, trapper, and scout of the American West. Trapping from an early age, in the 1850s he became an Indian fighter and at the end of the decade established a trading post, concurrently holding a variety of jobs including county sheriff.

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