

**Getting Rid of Swilling's Mills**

**By Bill Russo**

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**Foreword:**

Getting Rid of Swilling's Mills is the first of Bill Russo's new Book, "The Lost Cities", a series of tales of communities lost, but not in the sense that they became Ghost Towns. On the contrary some of the communities went on to become major cities. Their growth was in large part due to what was lost; their horrible names - like Swilling's Mills and Pile-of-Bones. Getting rid of the old names wasn't always easy but it always involved a fascinating story. After you have read this first installment follow the link for a free copy of the second chapter: The Lost Cities: 'Pile-of Bones' and 'Hot Springs'.

<https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/742885>

In the mid to late 1800s as the nation pushed its way to the Pacific Ocean, Swilling's Mills was one of hundreds of tiny communities sprouting up in the scorched soil of the American West. Most of those rowdy, untamed towns died off quickly.

The citizens of Swilling's Mills wanted their town to endure and prosper, but how could a town with such an inelegant name ever expect to attract new settlers and become a real city?

"Jumpin' Jehoshaphat, the name of this village should be tarred, feathered, and run out of town on the back of a mule," said Grover Jeffries, the owner of the mercantile store.

He urged of all his customers to join forces with him in demanding that the horrible name be changed to anything but Swilling's Mills.

"There's nothing wrong with our town's name said one of the men at a meeting called for the purpose of instituting a more fitting and proper appellation for the community. "Our village was not named for the four dance halls and 16 saloons on Main Street, or for the drunken swilling of cheap whiskey - but for Major Jack Swilling, hero of the Indian Wars, the Civil War, and the great canal builder who founded this town."

"He's right," added a rancher, "Jack Swilling was a stalwart of the first rank. He was our first postmaster and justice of the peace. And even if he was one of the most eager patrons of the 16 saloons and four dance halls, he should never be dishonored by disowning 'Swilling' as our name."

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