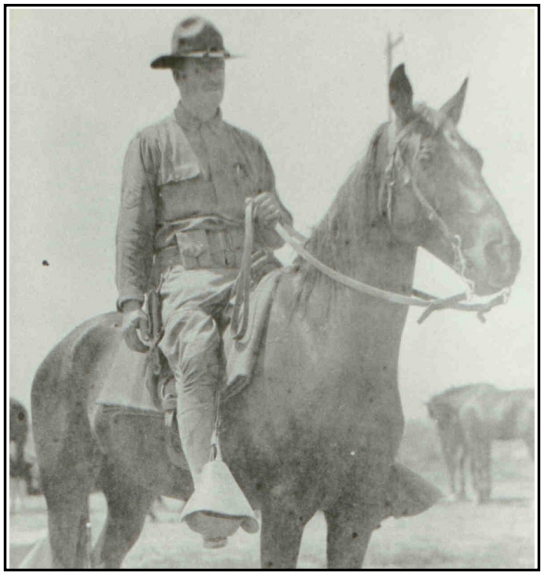


December Roundup

Wednesday, December 9, 2026

Almansor Court—700 S. Almansor, Alhambra, CA

Social Hour: 5:00 P.M. Dinner: 6:00 P.M.



Top Sergeant William T. Dillon on the Mexican Border, 1914.

King Bill, the California Mustang, 1869-1938

Brian Dervin Dillon, Ph.D.

California, from the time of the Gold Rush, was the land of second chances, where you could re-invent yourself, and start anew. One who did so came west just in time to enlist in the First California Volunteer Infantry, to fight in the Spanish-American War. Over the next 20 years he fought in the Infantry, the Cavalry, and the Artillery, in four different wars on four different continents, but always returned to California. He enlisted under three different false names, "laundering" his identify as was common in the American Army. Rising up through the ranks, he became a **Mustang** officer, going from Private in 1898 to Top Sergeant in 1910 to Lieutenant Colonel in 1918. He spoke four languages, and in addition to his military service volunteered as a lay chaplain, a boxing referee, and the captain of a prize-winning baseball team. His soldiers called him **King Bill**, and he was speaker B.D. Dillon's grandfather.

Brian Dervin Dillon, a 5th-generation Californian, is both the son and the father of historians. An archaeologist, he has done original fieldwork in 46 of California's 58 counties, and in four other New World countries. Brian was the youngest Ph.D. at U.C. Berkeley since the founding of his department in 1901. He taught at major California universities and has published more than 300 articles and books on history and prehistory. Brian was the 2017 Sheriff of the Los Angeles Corral, and is the newest Living Legend (2025) of Westerners International. Dr. Dillon's illustrated lecture on his grandfather, ***King Bill, the California Mustang,*** is the 16th he has presented to the Los Angeles Corral.