



Some people believe this photo shows legendary outlaw Billy the Kid (far left) with his gang in 1878.

# Is This Billy the Kid?

A new photo of a legendary outlaw may have been found.

He was a thief and a killer who broke out of jail twice. Billy the Kid was one of the most **notorious** outlaws of the Wild West.

His real name was probably Henry McCarty. He also went by the name William H. Bonney. He was called “the Kid” because he was just a teenager when he became a criminal. He died in 1881, at the age of 21, after a sheriff shot him in New Mexico.

Despite the Kid’s fame, only one photo of him was known to exist. But now a company claims to have a second photo of the famous outlaw. It has been valued at \$5 million!

## Detective Work

In 2010, a man named Randy Guijarro bought three photos for \$2 at an antique shop in California. When he looked closely at one of the photos, he thought one of the men might

### Word to Know

**notorious** (noh-TOR-ee-uhss) *adjective*. widely known, usually for something bad

be the Kid. Last year, he took the photo to Kagin’s, a company that collects and sells historical objects from the Old West.

David McCarthy is an expert at Kagin’s. He agreed that the man in the photo looks like Billy. “But just looking alike isn’t enough,” McCarthy says.

McCarthy’s team worked for more than a year to prove that the man in the photo was Billy. They worked with experts to match other men in the photo with members of the Kid’s gang.

Last month, Kagin’s announced that it had enough evidence to prove that the man in the photo was Billy the Kid. Some experts believe the photo was taken during a wedding at a ranch in New Mexico.

Kagin’s put the photo up for sale for \$5 million. If it sells for that amount, the photo will be the most expensive ever sold.

## Not So Fast

Many people aren’t convinced the newly discovered photo shows the Kid. Mark Lee

Gardner, who wrote a book about Billy, is one of them. He says there isn’t enough proof that the Kid was ever at the place in the photo.

Gardner says debates like the one over the photo are what make studying history fun.

“When there’s controversy,” he says, “that means history is alive.”



This photo of Billy the Kid sold for \$2.3 million in 2011.

COURTESY OF KAGIN'S INC. (OLD PHOTO, CLOSE-UP PHOTO); CL ARCHIVE/ALAMY (BILLY THE KID)